

Saturday February 1 1997

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Cyprus 1.10
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The Guardian

INTERNATIONAL
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The Week

The fun of the
Life in a single
Page 13. Plus: **Don't**

The Joanna Coles Interview

The fun of the
Life in a single
Page 20

Cricket

England's blushes
grow even redder
Page 20

Budget 'black hole' looms

Alex Brummer
Financial Editor

AN INCOMING Labour government, eager to fulfil its commitment to unemployed youth and keep the lid on public borrowing, could be forced to introduce an early Budget amid growing fears of a black hole in the exchequer's finances. Treasury officials are understood to be dusting off a series of contingency ideas, including tax increases via reduced allowances and reliefs, should shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown decide to tackle the situation on taking office. It is believed these could be introduced without breaching the strict rules outlined by Mr Brown in a speech on January 30, in which he pledged that a Labour government would not increase the top rate of income tax. The Tories are already claiming Labour will attack tax allowances if it comes to power. There is increasing concern in Whitehall that over-generous public sector pay increases of up to 3.4 per cent recommended for 1.3 million workers, together with pre-election spending pledges, could combine with the problem of diminishing tax revenues to undermine the exchequer. The centrepiece of Gordon Brown's first budget would be the proposed windfall tax on public utilities, a one-off levy which could yield as much as £5 billion. Much of this money has already been pre-committed to a national training programme designed to give the appropriate skills to 250,000 unemployed young people. However, the Treasury is also understood to believe that Mr Brown's mini-budget will provide him with an opportunity to begin dealing with the imbalances in the public finances which have been inadequately dealt with by the Conservatives. Fiscal experts at the Treasury believe the current loose budgetary stance has shifted too much of the burden of tackling inflation on to interest rates. This week it was disclosed that the Governor of the Bank of England, Eddie George, and Chancellor Kenneth Clarke take diametrically opposing views on base rates. The governor believes rates need to rise by at least half a point to 6.5 per cent to meet the Government's inflation

target, a move which Mr Clarke refuses to endorse for fear of slowing the recovery — a stance he underlined at the world economic forum in Davos yesterday. Inside the Treasury, the main problem is seen to be public finances, with the Government forecasting a public sector borrowing requirement of £26.4 billion in the present financial year falling to £19.2 billion in 1997-98. Even if these figures stand up to close scrutiny, they are seen as far too high a figure for public borrowing in the fifth year of expansion. The underlying position in the public finances could be even worse if the Government's "spend to save" programme, designed to improve tax collection, fails to deliver and if public sector pay were to breach the public spending ceiling as looks increasingly likely. With the proposals for public sector pay for nurses, doctors, teachers and the armed forces already threatening next year's public spending ceilings, the shadow Chancellor made it plain yesterday there would "no blank cheques" for public spending if the Labour Party came to power. Reiterating his promise not to shift beyond the public spending ceilings he may inherit from the Tories, Mr Brown said: "Stability will be underpinned by a firm and unflinching commitment to prudent and responsible spending, so there can be no blank cheques." He added: "Under Labour, all public sector pay agreements must be financed within the agreed departmental cash limits, upon which departments must now plan." The fear is that if the Tories implement the pay deals, even on a staged basis, Labour's room for manoeuvre will be severely restricted. In Davos, Mr Clarke said there had been "no decisions as yet" on public pay, arguing that they would "have to be affordable in relation to the important public services to which they relate." But he did not rule them out. Labour has high hopes of meeting its own priorities, within existing cash limits, with sweeping internal budgetary reforms under which each spending department would have to reassess its requirements from the ground up. These new plans would be fully implemented in November's budget. Brown warning on pay, page 4; Clarke set for clash, page 11

Major offers fair shares

JOHNSON Major yesterday promised free shares for everyone who bought a piece of their British-owned workplace when he launched the first of his manifesto big ideas — the "sharematch" society. In the Conservative alternative to Tony Blair's "shareholder" society — and in an

attempt to build on the feel-good factor generated by building societies' plans to hand out shares to 15 million people over the next year — Mr Major also promised new freedoms for people opting to take up personal pensions. The big shareout, page 2

Five accused in Gucci murder case

The ex-wife, the psychic and the hit-men bring new drama to lurid saga of Italy's doomed dynasty



Patrizia Reggiani Martinielli, ex-wife of the late Maurizio Gucci, at police HQ in Milan yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: SERGIO PONTORERO

Prison boss takes off the chains

Scandal of dying cancer patient leads to action against officers

Alan Travis
Home Affairs Editor

FIVE senior staff at Cardiff prison, including a deputy governor, are to face disciplinary action over the treatment of a remand prisoner who spent the last 11 days of his life shackled to a hospital bed. The Prison Service's director general, Richard Tilt, yesterday publicly acknowledged that Geoffrey Thomas, aged 35, who died from cancer, should never have been cuffed and chained. Mr Tilt also announced new guidelines on use of shackles for prisoners in hospital. These will mean cuffs are removed from prisoner patients at the request of medical staff, and inmates will no longer be chained to beds. "I am determined we should learn the lessons of this case, and I have issued new instructions to all governors making it crystal clear

what I expect when they and their staff are called upon to deal with sensitive situations like this," said Mr Tilt. "Security is important but it should never blind us to the overriding need for compassion and humanity." The Prison Service's director of security, Tony Pearson, yesterday visited Mr Thomas's mother, Marina Davies, and apologised for the additional suffering her son had endured. A family claim for compensation would receive "sympathetic consideration," he said. The public apology comes a year after the chaining of pregnant women prisoners, who had been taken to hospital to give birth, sparked an outcry. The five senior prison staff at Cardiff who now face disciplinary action include the then deputy governor at the jail, the senior medical officer, and three other middle managers, who refused requests from the prison off-



Geoffrey Thomas: mother given personal apology

were told he was dying. He remained handcuffed to the bed first by the ankle, and then when it became too swollen, by the wrist, with two officers in his room. The new guidelines make clear that if a doctor or senior nurse asks for removal of handcuffs and chains from a prisoner because of the need for treatment, or because it is impeding the care of the prisoner, they must be removed. They state that the only exceptions are for Category A high security prisoners, about whom medical staff requests would immediately be referred to the governor. In future, inmates must be chained only to prison officers, not to beds or other items of furniture. The shadow home secretary, Jack Straw, said last night he was glad the Prison Service had made an unreserved apology. "I am only sorry it has taken four weeks to make." But the Penal Affairs Consortium said the guidelines were still too rigid and meant prisoners had to be chained to attend funerals and while travelling to hospital.

John Hooper in Rome

THE lurid saga of Italy's foremost dysfunctional family, the Guccis, entered a new chapter yesterday when Maurizio Gucci's ex-wife was arrested on suspicion of ordering his murder two years ago. Just to make sure this latest episode would match anything dreamt up in a scriptwriter's imagination, police also detained a psychic they described as her spiritual adviser. Gucci's ex-wife, Patrizia Reggiani Martinielli, aged 48, was arrested at a flat in central Milan. Two men have been detained separately in connection with the case. A third man thought to be involved is in jail for selling drugs. An elegant woman whose dark good looks won her comparisons with actresses Elizabeth Taylor, Ms Reggiani normally lives in St Moritz. She is the daughter of a transport magnate and the mother of Gucci's two children, Alessandra, aged 21, and Allegra, aged 16. The couple married in 1978 but separated after 12 years and later divorced. Ms Reggiani subsequently wrote an unpublished book whose principal character, a thinly disguised version of her ex-husband, meets a sticky end. The book is entitled *What A Privilege To Be Killed By A Hit Man*. Gucci, the last member of the dynasty to run the company which made his family's name famous, was shot dead on the steps outside his office in Milan in March 1995. He was the grandson of Guccio Gucci, who founded the luxury goods business in 1923. A Bahrain-based bank, Investcorp, purchased Maurizio's 50 per cent stake in 1993. It had bought out his cousins six years earlier. The firm has now been floated as a public company and its owners and managers are likely to be dismayed by the latest development. In recent years



Maurizio Gucci (above) was first shot from behind in the buttocks and shoulders, then finished off with two shots at close range to the face. Eyewitnesses remarked that his killer was elegantly dressed

they had worked hard to restore cachet to a name which, apart from being dragged through the mud by those who bore it, had become synonymous with tacky, brand-name snobbery. Police in Milan were not revealing what they suspected to be the motive behind the killing. But Gucci was known to have had an acrimonious relationship with his ex-wife, and according to a report carried by the Italian news agency Ansa, Ms Reggiani had challenged her alimony payments. The report said police believed she had paid two hit men 600 million lire (£230,000) to kill her ex-husband. The men alleged by police to have carried

Turn to page 2, column 8

"CRACKERJACK THRILLER"

Variety

"GRIPPING STUFF"

Maxim

"RUTHLESSLY EFFECTIVE"

Empire

MEL GIBSON



RANSOM

SOMEONE IS GOING TO PAY.

ODEON
LEICESTER SQ.
0151 315 4215
12.00 2.00 5.00 8.00 11.00

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Prime Minister promises 'share match' for workers buying into firms

Major's shareout

David Hencke
Westminster Correspondent

JOHNSON Major launched the first of his manifesto big ideas yesterday — the "share-match" — as the Conservative alternative to Tony Blair's much vaunted stakeholder society.

Attempting to build on the "feelgood factor" generated by building societies' plans to hand out free shares to some 15 million people over the next year, he promised free shares for everyone who decided to buy a piece of their British-owned workplace.

He also promised new freedoms for people opting to take up personal pensions, both employees and the self-em-

ployed. Just under 10 million people in Britain currently have shares. This is likely to rise to between 15 million and 20 million this year as a result of societies such as the Halifax and the Alliance & Leicester converting to banks.

The people's share offer was depicted as a share-out, contrast to Labour's centralised state. "Many companies would like to give employees free shares when the employee invests money of his or her own, but inland Revenue rules are too restrictive at the moment," said Mr Major.

"I intend to change the rules to help more companies to top up their employees' investment in shares with free shares from the company."

But yesterday it was revealed that changing the

"restrictive tax rules" involved a diminution of the present terms. Under the new rules British companies can give one free share for up to every five purchased by an employee.

On pensions Mr Major said: "We are going to relax the rules to allow companies to set up personal pension schemes for groups of employees."

"We also intend to remove a further problem that occurs when self-employed people move in and out of jobs with larger employers. We plan to change the rules to allow people to take their pension with them and invest it alongside the company pension."

The Prime Minister's "People's Share" initiative came as he dismissed the lat-

est opinion poll showing the Tories 25 points behind Labour as "complete rubbish" and predicted election victory.

Labour dished out to Mr Major some of his own medicine. Alistair Darling, shadow chief treasury secretary, accused him of making "hundreds of millions of pounds worth of spending commitments" on share ownership and business rates.

The Liberal Democrats were equally unimpressed. Robert Mactennan, president of the party, said: "What we need is a citizen's society, not just a share owning one."

But financial experts welcomed the plans. Paul Burgin at financial advisers Fiona Price & Partners said share ownership was a good idea.

Ex-wife, psychic and the hit-men

continued from page 1

out the murder were named as Orazio Cicala, aged 58, who is in jail on unrelated drugs charges, and Benedetto Cerullo, aged 35, who also has a criminal record. The third man is a hotel doorman, Ivano Savioni, aged 40. His alleged role was not immediately clear.

A senior police officer claimed the murder was organised by the psychic, who was arrested in Naples. She was named as Giuseppina Auremma, aged 51.

Ms Auremma is understood never to have practised professionally as a medium, but she is credited by some in Milanese high society with having supernatural powers.

She was reported to have been collaborating with Ms Reggiani on another book at the time of her arrest. The Gucci family's internal divisions have been publicly compared with those of the Borgias.

Such has been their viciousness that one of their customers, Jackie Onassis, was moved to send the then head of the family a telegram with the single word: "Why?"

Guccio's son, Aldo, fell out with his father over the company's expansion. He in turn fell out with one of his sons, Paolo, who reported him for tax evasion.

As a result, Aldo, by then in his 80s, was sentenced to a year's imprisonment by an

American judge. Paolo, who once complained that he had been beaten up by other members of the board, was subsequently fired by his uncle and ended up founding a company of his own which also traded under the Gucci name.

Maurizio himself was tried for attempted fraud after his relatives accused him of forging his father's signature to evade inheritance tax.

Such infighting did nothing to enhance the lustre of the Gucci name, the firm's emblem of two intertwined Gs or the characteristic red and green stripes which adorned its bags.

But during the 1990s these symbols of a casual, though costly, elegance were in any

case being devalued by over-exploitation and widespread counterfeiting.

After Maurizio left the firm, he became involved in a number of complex business deals which were originally suspected to be at the root of his murder.

He had sunk money in casinos and there was talk of involvement in organised crime. But police said at 100a outburst that professional book-lums would have done a cleaner job.

He was first shot from behind in the buttocks and shoulders, then finished off with two shots at close range to the face. Eyewitnesses remarked that his killer was elegantly dressed.



An elderly woman sleeps on a tram as a student demonstrator helps to bring traffic to a halt in Belgrade yesterday. It was the 76th day running that thousands of people demonstrated against the government's annulment of municipal elections won by an opposition coalition.

PHOTOGRAPH: LASLO BALOGH

Seamus Heaney's Derry lament

Poet reveals lyric written in the aftermath of Bloody Sunday

David Sharrock
Ireland Correspondent

THE Nobel prize-winning poet Seamus Heaney yesterday revealed for the first time a lyric written by him in the aftermath of Bloody Sunday. It was inspired by his driving from

Belfast to Derry on the day of the funerals of the 13 victims. Heaney, who grew up in the county of Londonderry and went to school in the city, recalled that he was asked by Luke Kelly of the Dubliners to write him a song in the aftermath of the massacre. He called it *The Road to Derry*.

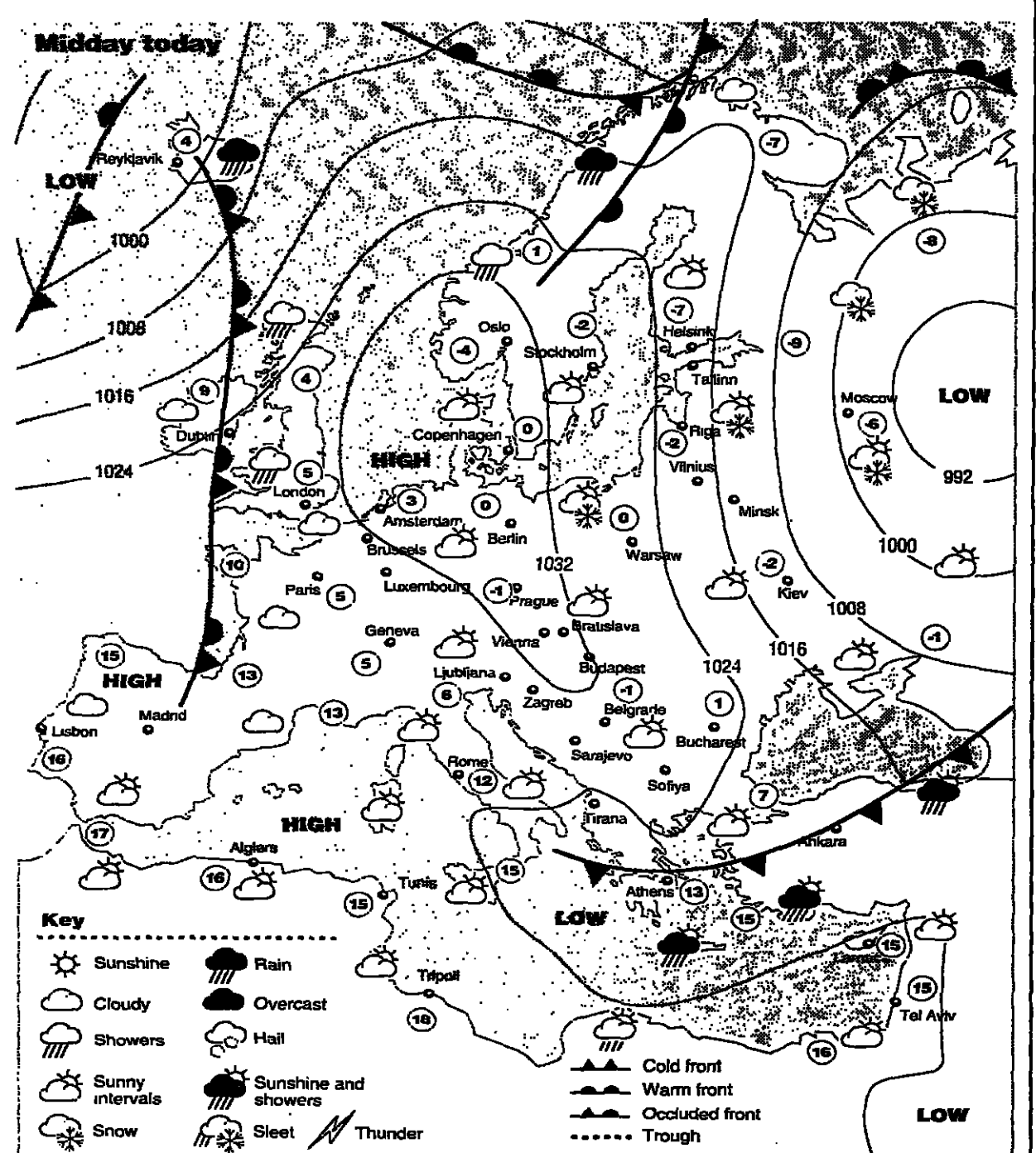
"I did four stanzas and sent them to him, with the sugges-

tion that they might be put to the air of *The Boys of Mullahbeg*, but nothing ever came of it," the poet said in a letter to the *Derry Journal*, in which he sent the unfinished song. "I spoke to Luke on one occasion and I remember him saying that he thought the air I had suggested was too slow. Anyway, I think it is in order to reprint this abbreviated version now, 26 years after the drive from Belfast to Derry."

Luke Kelly died of a stroke in the 1980s and the Dubliners have gone through a number of personnel changes. Mr Heaney has previously written about *Bloody Sunday* in *The Funerals*, published in 1979: "PARAS THIRTEEN, the walls said/BOG-SIDE NIL. That Wednesday/Everybody held/His breath and trembled..."

The poet has occasionally been criticised in the past for not being more political in his writings on the conflict in Northern Ireland, particularly after he went to live in the Irish Republic.

The weather in Europe



Forecast for the cities

City	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
London	10-14	11-15	12-16	13-17	14-18	15-19
Birmingham	9-13	10-14	11-15	12-16	13-17	14-18
Manchester	8-12	9-13	10-14	11-15	12-16	13-17
Cardiff	7-11	8-12	9-13	10-14	11-15	12-16
Belfast	6-10	7-11	8-12	9-13	10-14	11-15
Edinburgh	5-9	6-10	7-11	8-12	9-13	10-14
Glasgow	4-8	5-9	6-10	7-11	8-12	9-13
Liverpool	3-7	4-8	5-9	6-10	7-11	8-12
Newcastle	2-6	3-7	4-8	5-9	6-10	7-11
Nottingham	1-5	2-6	3-7	4-8	5-9	6-10
Sheffield	0-4	1-5	2-6	3-7	4-8	5-9
Southampton	-1-3	0-4	1-5	2-6	3-7	4-8
Wolverhampton	-2-2	-1-3	0-4	1-5	2-6	3-7
York	-3-1	-2-2	-1-3	0-4	1-5	2-6

Around the world

City	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Amsterdam	10-14	11-15	12-16	13-17	14-18	15-19
Berlin	9-13	10-14	11-15	12-16	13-17	14-18
Brussels	8-12	9-13	10-14	11-15	12-16	13-17
Copenhagen	7-11	8-12	9-13	10-14	11-15	12-16
Dublin	6-10	7-11	8-12	9-13	10-14	11-15
Helsinki	5-9	6-10	7-11	8-12	9-13	10-14
London	4-8	5-9	6-10	7-11	8-12	9-13
Madrid	3-7	4-8	5-9	6-10	7-11	8-12
Moscow	2-6	3-7	4-8	5-9	6-10	7-11
Paris	1-5	2-6	3-7	4-8	5-9	6-10
Rome	0-4	1-5	2-6	3-7	4-8	5-9
Stockholm	-1-3	0-4	1-5	2-6	3-7	4-8
Toronto	-2-2	-1-3	0-4	1-5	2-6	3-7
Warsaw	-3-1	-2-2	-1-3	0-4	1-5	2-6
Yokohama	-4-0	-3-1	-2-2	-1-3	0-4	1-5

European weather outlook

A strong ridge of high pressure will keep most places fine and cold with sunny spells and persistent frost, but northern Norway will turn cloudy with outbreaks of snow and rising temperatures. Max temp ranging from 2 to 5C.

Lower Germany, Germany, Austria, Switzerland

A large area of high pressure covers all areas. That means once any early fog and drizzle disperses it should be dry with a little sunshine, although it will be cold with a good deal of cloud. Max temp ranging from 0-5C.

France

Central and eastern regions will be dry with some sunshine once any early-morning fog, frost and low cloud clears away. Western France will cloud over with some drizzly rain, but amounts will be quite small. Generally rather cold after dawn from the south. Max temp ranging from 5 to 15C from north to south.

Spain and Portugal

Rather cloudy and damp in many central and northern regions with some fog and drizzle over the mountains, but staying mostly dry and bright in southern parts of Portugal and Spain. Max temp ranging from 10 to 15C.

Italy

The possibility of a little rain in the extreme south of the country and on Sicily, but most of Italy will remain dry with some sunshine, although early-morning fog patches may be slow to clear in one or two spots. Max temp ranging from 5 to 15C from north to south.

Greece

Rather cold and showery in most of Greece, but there will be some sunny intervals. Max temp ranging from 8-13C.

Television and radio — Saturday

Time	Channel	Programme
6.00	BBC 1	6.00 News, 6.05 Sportsweek, 6.10 News, 6.15 Sportsweek, 6.20 News, 6.25 Sportsweek, 6.30 News, 6.35 Sportsweek, 6.40 News, 6.45 Sportsweek, 6.50 News, 6.55 Sportsweek, 7.00 News, 7.05 Sportsweek, 7.10 News, 7.15 Sportsweek, 7.20 News, 7.25 Sportsweek, 7.30 News, 7.35 Sportsweek, 7.40 News, 7.45 Sportsweek, 7.50 News, 7.55 Sportsweek, 8.00 News, 8.05 Sportsweek, 8.10 News, 8.15 Sportsweek, 8.20 News, 8.25 Sportsweek, 8.30 News, 8.35 Sportsweek, 8.40 News, 8.45 Sportsweek, 8.50 News, 8.55 Sportsweek, 9.00 News, 9.05 Sportsweek, 9.10 News, 9.15 Sportsweek, 9.20 News, 9.25 Sportsweek, 9.30 News, 9.35 Sportsweek, 9.40 News, 9.45 Sportsweek, 9.50 News, 9.55 Sportsweek, 10.00 News, 10.05 Sportsweek, 10.10 News, 10.15 Sportsweek, 10.20 News, 10.25 Sportsweek, 10.30 News, 10.35 Sportsweek, 10.40 News, 10.45 Sportsweek, 10.50 News, 10.55 Sportsweek, 11.00 News, 11.05 Sportsweek, 11.10 News, 11.15 Sportsweek, 11.20 News, 11.25 Sportsweek, 11.30 News, 11.35 Sportsweek, 11.40 News, 11.45 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Sound the advance... If British Digital Broadcasting succeeds in its bid, it will offer 15 new channels, though analysts differ on how the new system will affect the industry's future

PHOTOGRAPH: KIPPA MATTHEWS

Coup jump-starts digital TV

The digital age

Contenders and proposed plans for the remaining multiplexes

Allocated multiplexes

1 BBC
• BBC1 and BBC2 in widescreen
• BBC 24-hour continuous news
• Additional programmes to complement BBC1 and BBC2

2 ITV
• ITV in widescreen
• Possible ITV2
• Channel 4 in widescreen
• Telestar

3 BBC
• Channel 5
• S4C in Wales
• Gaelic programmes

4 British Digital Broadcasting Consortium of Carlton Communications Group, Granada, and Sky
• Carlton Select: classic British drama, special events, etc.
• Granada Plus: original and comedy, Corporation Street, classic
• BBC Horizon: nature, science, history, technology and children's service
• Sky 1: family entertainment

5 Carlton Films: cinema made-for-TV films
• Granada Good Life: Lifestyle, including health, gardening, cooking, motoring
• BBC Showcase and BBC Style: best of BBC1 and BBC2 and food and fashion
• Public Eye: drama, movies and documentaries
• Sky News: in this multiplex
• Granada TV Shopping: the shopping channel
• Carlton Entertainment: drama, children's programmes, comedy
• Granada Sports Club: Football and night-line music
• BBC One TV: 12 TV, plus three premium-priced channels
• Sky Movies
• The Movie Channel
• Sky Sports

6 Digital Television Network
• Wholly owned by International Cablecast
• British Sports Channel: minority sports
• The Knowledge Network: educational programming
• The Money Channel: popular money programming
• Satellite TV: local services in Manchester
• The Living History Channel: transmitting past from ITN
• Digital Box Office: pay-per-view events from Hollywood and British cinema
• Arsenal Football Club: live programming
• Travel: holiday advice
• The Box: popular music channel
• The Turner Classic Movies
• Carlton Network: cartoons and evening programmes for grown-ups
• BBC Gaelic: entertainment programmes
• The Movie Experience: films from British and abroad plus shopping and data services

7 S4C Digital Network Ltd
• Wholly owned subsidiary of S4C, applying to run the third multiplex
• Sporting channel (and ITN)
• Information Channel (and ITN)

8 Remaining half of Multiplex 5

9 Remaining half of Multiplex 5

10 Remaining half of Multiplex 5

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30 Remaining half of Multiplex 5

Andrew Culf on how the media world was stunned by the three-way alliance behind a blockbusting £300m licence bid

THE landscape of the television industry was transformed yesterday as Britain's three most powerful broadcast casters joined forces for the digital revolution.

The coup — pulling together the two largest ITV companies, the biggest satellite operator and the BBC — stunned rivals and reinvigorated the prospects for digital terrestrial television (DTT).

If the consortium, British Digital Broadcasting, backed by £300 million from Carlton Communications, Granada Television and BSkyB, succeeds in its licence bid, it will offer 15 new channels, ranging from entertainment to sport.

Some analysts forecast the deal would allow Rupert Murdoch, who owns 40 per cent of BSkyB, to tighten his grip on British television. Others said it would spell the end of damaging hardware wars between the rival digital terrestrial and satellite systems.

DTT is due to launch in July 1998. Viewers will need a set-top decoder box, expected to cost about £200, to receive pictures via their TV sets and rooftop aerials.

They will automatically receive the existing terrestrial services, BBC1, BBC2, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5, plus the BBC's planned 24-hour news service. Most of the other new channels will be offered on a subscription basis.

Yesterday two companies submitted bids to run the remaining 50 per cent of DTT, each applying for licences to three of the so-called multiplexes (or bundles of channels). British Digital Broad-

casting (BDB), led by Michael Green, chairman of Carlton Communications, emerged as the clear favourite, as it was pitted against the Digital Television Network (DTN), part of the NTL/CableTel group.

The BBC was courted by both groups, but decided to give first option to BDB: its four channels will offer science, natural history, fashion and food, and a TV version of Radio 1.

A BBC spokesman said: "This will ensure viewers have the best possible opportunity to access the new channels being provided by the BBC/Flextech joint venture. The BBC believes this will help contribute to the overall success of DTT, which it strongly supports." The BBC services are likely to be offered to DTN if its bid is successful.

Mr Green said: "Seventy-

five per cent of viewers are currently unable, unwilling, or have not yet subscribed to cable or satellite. We will offer them the chance to watch an exciting and competitively priced subscription programme service, including the best of ITV, Sky and the BBC.

"Going digital is the most important development for British television since the introduction of colour."

He brushed off suggestions that Mr Murdoch would have a disproportionate influence and said there would now be a common set-top box for terrestrial and satellite.

"You cannot have a confused consumer. He must know the box he buys will not become obsolete."

RECEIVER manufacturers are also keen to make integrated digital TV sets, likely to cost about £200 more than existing TVs and be available within two years.

Some observers said BSkyB's move showed a lack of faith in the future of satellite dishes.

For the first time, Sky

Sports, Sky Movies and the Movie Channel will be available — at a premium rate — to non-satellite and non-cable households.

DTN, wholly owned by CableTel, Britain's most successful cable company, said its plans would finally lead to the "super information highway". Transactional services, including the booking of train and cinema tickets, would be possible through the TV.

It would not comment on its investment. Key backers United News and Media and the French media company Canal Plus decided against backing its bid.

Jeremy Thorpe, chief executive of DTN, said: "We are looking to take multi-channel TV from 25 per cent of the population into most homes in the UK."

Steven Wagner, group managing director of CableTel, said: "Carlton and the others are offering more of the same. We are offering something very different." Its services concentrate on education, participant sports, and consumer advice backed by interactive data services, as well as entertainment.

Both bidders plan an ex-

Leader comment, page 8



Reticent mogul made doubts vanish

Profile

Mastermind is quiet man who lets the balance sheets do the talking

Andrew Culf

AT CARLTON Communications' luxurious headquarters in London's Knightsbridge, a new place had already been fixed to the wall proclaiming that the premises were the home of British Digital Broadcasting (BDB).

In the foyer, alongside the modern art and plush leather sofas, was a giant cardboard remote control handset — spelling out the 15 proposed new channels, with the accompanying slogan: "At the touch of a but-

ton, something for everyone".

Prowling the first floor, Michael Green, Carlton's chairman, was revelling in the role of springing one of the television industry's biggest surprises.

A week that began with his colourful rival Michael Grade quitting as Channel 4's chief executive ended with the more reticent mogul announcing a grand alliance of British television's most powerful players.

Mr Green, aged 49, and one of television's highest earners with a total pay package last year of £727,000, was exuding excitement over the prospects for digital terrestrial television.

Although he smokes giant cigars like Mr Grade, Mr Green eschews the showbusiness limelight, preferring instead to let balance sheets do the talking.

Overnight, the doubts about digital terrestrial television had evaporated.



Michael Green: "Everything is going to be digital"

Mr Green, the first chairman of BDB, said: "It is quite extraordinary the scepticism there was before this."

Many in the industry had argued the technology would be rendered redundant because of BSkyB's

plans to launch up to 200 digital satellite channels later this year.

But Mr Green believes the critics misunderstood the technology and failed to realise the level of support from Virginia Bottomley, the National Heritage Secretary, for digital terrestrial.

"They had a vision. That vision is that everything is going to be digital."

"Sky has proved that people want choice. There are distinct advantages with digital such as ease of access. This should allow the majority of people in Britain to enjoy multi-channel television."

Mr Green described the programming proposition from BDB as a "very attractive range", delivering what the public wanted at a competitive price.

He said that the BBC channels were a vital ingredient.

"The BBC have been very bold in their support of our application and it is to their credit."

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Like the Roman empire at the time of its decline, the sport which began more than 70 years ago as a ritualised mating prelude for the upper classes is under threat. At its gates stand the twin barbarians of professionalism and competitive ruthlessness.

The Week page 17

4 BRITAIN

Bentley sister takes battle to the grave

Owen Bowcott on a funeral pledge

IN THE hope of a last-minute Home Office pardon, Iris Bentley's daughter carried a mobile telephone to her mother's grave yesterday — waiting for the call which never came.

While Ms Bentley was being buried in Croydon cemetery, south London, beside her brother Derek, who was hanged in 1953 for the murder of a policeman, government officials were still considering whether to grant him a full posthumous pardon.

Several hundred mourners gathered at the funeral service for Ms Bentley, who had campaigned tirelessly for the case against her brother to be quashed. The message on the wreath from her daughter Maria Dingwall, 34, read: "Mum, you can trust me to fight to the bitter end. I will get the pardon. That is my prayer to you."

In the end, speakers at the service in Christchurch, Colliers Wood, denounced the Home Office for its "callous indifference" in refusing to bring forward a decision before 65-year-old Ms Bentley died of cancer on January 22.

Derek Bentley, who always denied urging his 16-year-old accomplice, Christopher Craig, to shoot PC Sidney Miles after a botched bur-



Iris Bentley's funeral carriage heading for Croydon cemetery, south London, where she was buried beside her brother, Derek. PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN ARNOLD

glary in Croydon, was condemned to death at the age 19 after a controversial trial.

His fate was dramatised in the film *Let Him Have It*, whose title was taken from the words Derek Bentley allegedly shouted moments before the murder. Craig escaped capital punishment because of his age and was released in 1963.

One of the victories in Iris Bentley's long battle was to have her brother's remains moved from a prison burial ground to Croydon cemetery for a full Christian funeral. Their graves will share a family headstone, on which is inscribed: "Here lies the body of Derek Bentley, a victim of British justice."

In April, Derek Bentley's

case is expected to be one of the first presented at the Criminal Cases Review Commission for referral to the Court of Appeal.

Among those attending yesterday's funeral were folk singer Ralph McTell, Labour MP Joan Lester and Frances Crook, of the Howard League for Penal Reform.

The solicitor Benedict Bir-

berg paid tribute to Iris Bentley's determination: "Inspired with a sense of duty she inherited from her father, she held a mirror up to show the hypocritical barbarity of a society that could do what it did to Derek in the name of justice."

Ms Lester, an opponent of capital punishment, told mourners: "I am here to sa-

lute an outstanding woman, who even when ill displayed enormous strength and has made a major contribution to British justice and our society."

Ms Bentley's coffin was taken to the graveyard from the service at Christchurch — next door to her home — in a glass-sided carriage drawn by two black plumed horses.

Key court victory for child carers in first case under 1995 act

'Case shows dramatically how disability affects all the family'

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

A 14-YEAR-OLD partially deaf girl was forced to bathe her profoundly disabled younger sister in a washing-up bowl because the family's council failed to fulfil a commitment to install a suitable shower.

Elisha Whittingham, who has educational difficulties and whose mother suffers from heart problems, depression and a bad back, helps care for 10-year-old Elisha, who has cerebral palsy and epilepsy and cannot talk, stand, sit or walk.

Yesterday the family won a landmark legal victory which recognises the needs of children and teenagers who are disabled or have other family members.

In the first case under the 1995 Carers' Act, Newham council in east London admit-

ted it had failed in its duty to assess and meet Elisha's needs.

The outcome will be seen not only to prove the value of the act to carers in general, but also to identify young carers as a distinct and deserving group.

Bill Pittsheadley, chief executive of the Carers' National Association, said: "This is a very important case which demonstrates how important it was to include young carers within the Carers' Act, despite initial resistance from the Government."

"It shows very dramatically how disability affects everyone in the family."

Official estimates put the number of young carers at between 19,000 and 51,000.

However, ministers were reluctant to see them included in the act, which was based on a private member's bill, on the grounds that their

needs could be assessed within the Children Act.

The action against Newham was brought under a total of four social services acts by Angela Whittingham, a lone mother, and two of her four children. One of the family's principal complaints against Newham was its failure to fulfil a commitment — made in 1995 — to install a shower suitable for Venice, who has to be bathed by her mother and sister in a washing-up bowl.

At a preliminary hearing in December, the council was found to have been "horribly dilatory" in installing a shower, and was ordered to install one by January 13.

By last Wednesday, when the case ended without a full hearing, a shower had been delivered to the Whittingham's home, but remained uninstalled.

Nicola Mackintosh, the family's solicitor, said the council had also failed to honour a 1993 undertaking to give Elisha and her mother 70 days' respite care a year, to

give them a break from looking after Venice, and to provide constant monitoring and support.

In accepting formal consent orders to end the case, Newham has promised to fulfil its commitments, including installation of a shower by the end of this month, and to carry out new assessments of the family's needs.

The council, which is to review its procedures, said in a statement: "Newham social services has given a clear commitment to the family and we will abide by it. We want to work closely with them to ensure their needs are met."

Ms Mackintosh, an expert in social services law, said: "There is no doubt the family care for Venice extremely well. But now they are at breaking point."

"This case marks a massive breakthrough for disabled people and their carers. It shows that local authorities must address the needs of the family individually and globally."

New Euro-myth from Old Hack

Stephen Bates in Brussels

IN the Old Hack pub in a seedy part of Brussels, Dennis Newson, veteran correspondent for Britain's tabloids, was yesterday celebrating the creation of another Euro-myth.

Three tabloids took his story about the European Union insisting on statues of former president Jacques Delors being erected along Britain's motorways.

Dennis explained: "I wrote a piece of whimsy."

Nevertheless, the whimsy made the *Daily Star* (Statue Up There Jacques?) and the *Daily Mail* (Danger — statue of Delors Ahead).

And it made page one of the *Sun*, under the heading: *You Daft Bastards, together with a leader suggesting: "They've finally gone off their rockers in Brussels."*

This follows a six-months-long planning inquiry which ended a year ago.

If underground tests in the laboratory prove successful, a full-scale disposal facility would be constructed costing £2 billion by 2015, but not until another inquiry had tested the safety case.

In his 2,500-word letter Sir John says that his committee

statue of European Commissioner and ex-Labour leader Neil Kinnock.

The only trouble was that, as with previous tabloid tales such as the straight banana story and the fable about fishermen being forced to wear hairnets, it was, as the *Sun* might say, complete B.S.

The story arose out of Resolution 18, passed by the European Parliament the previous day. That calls on the Commission to regulate that up to one per cent of funding in public works which receive EU money should go towards artwork to embellish the projects.

There is nothing about statues, or great European, not even Mr Delors.

Dennis said: "My story was a report of the parliament's vote. From that it is not a large step to say it may just be possible that the works of art might just possibly be of Euro-worthiness, and who might be considered more of a Euro-worthy than Delors?"

Brown risks union anger over public sector pay

David Hencke Westminster Correspondent

ORDON Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, yesterday said that a Labour government would not fund inflation-busting rises awarded by independent pay bodies to teachers, nurses, doctors and members of the armed forces.

Risking confrontation with the unions, Mr Brown insisted there would be no "blank cheques" for public-sector workers. He is determined to keep tight control on public spending, should Labour win the election.

Leftwingers in the party made it clear that they expected Mr Brown to pay the awards in full. Mr Brown, however, did not rule out the option of staging the awards between 3.3 and 3.4 per cent — even though Labour in the past has rejected such an approach.

"We have got to look at the position at the time. There may be circumstances in which you don't need to stage and there may be circumstances where you have to," he told BBC Radio 4's *World at One* programme.

The Defence Secretary, Michael Portillo, is facing the most difficulty in next week's pay settlement row. He has not budgeted enough cash to pay the 227,000 servicemen and women the expected 3.3 per cent increase, it emerged yesterday.

Treasury figures show that Mr Portillo is in a worse position than Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, and Gillian Shephard, the Education Secretary, because he conceded nearly £500 million cuts to the Treasury in this year's spending round.

Mr Dorrell and Mrs Shephard won an extra £1.8 billion from the Treasury to spend on health and education, leaving them some room to trade off pay increases.

Mr Portillo, who yesterday claimed that Labour would impose huge defence cuts, gave away £460 million to the Treasury in November after

officials pointed out that he had overspent his planned budget by £700 million this year.

Mr Portillo will have to plead with Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, to raid the £2.5 billion government reserves before the election, or tell disgruntled service personnel they will have to have a phased award, with no full implementation until October or January next year.

The plight of the military was overshadowed by protests from trade unions representing teachers, nurses and doctors to the tight-fisted financiers who dominate both Tory and Labour thinking.

The National Union of Teachers' general secretary, Doug McAvoy, said teachers would be disappointed if the recommended rise was at the level reported, and angry if the Government decided, as last year, to phase it in.

"If the Government did that, it would indicate the way it ignores the recommendations of the pay review body, and the consequence is to put a very big question mark over the independence of the review body," he told the BBC Radio 4 Today programme.

My advice to David Blunkett, if he were Education Secretary, would be to say what he said last year, which was that Labour would have honoured the recommendations in full."

The Royal College of Nursing said that 3.3 per cent would not be enough — particularly if it was staggered. "If the Government cannot afford to pay nurses a modest increase straight away, it is a clear sign that the NHS is seriously underfunded."

But there was pressure for restraint from the director of the National Association of Health Authorities and Trusts, Philip Hunt, who warned that the reported increases could lead to job losses. "We are very concerned that the award for doctors and nurses may be much higher than we can actually afford to pay."

Human rights commission rejects Adams plea on ban

AN attempt by Gerry Adams, president of Sinn Féin, to embarrass the British Government over an exclusion order which once banned him from mainland Britain failed yesterday when the European Commission of Human Rights in Strasbourg upheld the Government's case, says Stephen Bates.

The commission rejected the application by Mr Adams and the veteran Labour former Cabinet minister, Tony Benn, that the 1993 exclusion order violated his right of free expression.

The decision means that the application cannot now proceed to a final decision by the Court of Human Rights.

The commission said: "The

restriction may be reasonably said to pursue the interests of national security and the prevention of disorder or crime."

The judgment makes it clear that the Government ought to be able to claim immunity in the interests of national security.

It also appears to endorse, without comment, the British court ruling when Mr Adams challenged the ban that it would be "naïve in the extreme not to infer that he had at least substantial connections with the IRA."

The order was signed by Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, and prevented Mr Adams from travelling to London to attend a meeting at the House of Commons.

Conspiracy bill 'hits dissidents'

Richard Norton-Taylor

Ms yesterday gave the green light to a bill which for the first time makes it a criminal offence to incite or conspire in unlawful acts against the Government. Backed by Nigel Waterson, Tory MP for Eastbourne, with the Government's backing and the broad support of Labour's front bench, it was given a second reading without a vote.

Mr Waterson told the Commons the bill was aimed at "foreign extremists and football hooligans". Britain, insisted Timothy Kirkhope, a junior Home Office minister, was not, and never would be, a safe haven for terrorists.

He added that the United States had recently passed similar legislation.

He said political opposition to foreign regimes would not be affected by the bill. However, Alun Michael, Labour's home affairs spokesman, warned that the powers under the bill could be abused and hit "unintended targets".

Donald Anderson, Labour MP for Swansea East, warned

that the bill "effectively endorses the powers that be throughout the world". Nelson Mandela would have been caught by the bill if he had escaped to Britain, he said.

"In respect of terrorism, it is often said that one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter." Under the bill, it would be an offence to incite or conspire in activities in foreign countries which would be both unlawful if committed there and unlawful if carried out in Britain — a so-called "dual criminality" test. The bill specifically includes "messages" sent from Britain in support of opposition groups abroad.

The civil rights group, Liberty, warned yesterday that offences of conspiracy and incitement were notoriously difficult to define. "The evidence necessary to prove conspiracy is rarely available and the prosecution is forced to use evidence of support for particular political activities," it said.

The bill would have led to exiled members of the African National Congress during the apartheid regime being harassed by the police and possibly even convicted, it said.

"We need to take a careful look at how we can uphold Britain's place as a safe haven for the persecuted of the world whilst promoting non-violence," said John Wadham, Liberty's director.

"Locking up dissidents is not the solution."

Nuclear advisers 'misled' on waste

Paul Brown Environment Correspondent

GOVERNMENT advisers on nuclear waste were seriously misled over a seven-year period by Nirex, the nuclear industry company charged with its disposal, the Environment Secretary, John Gummer, was told yesterday.

Sir John Knill, chairman of the Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee between 1987 and 1995, has

written to Mr Gummer saying Nirex gave the committee assurances about scientific data which were not true.

He urged Mr Gummer to abandon plans to build a nuclear waste depository under Sellafield in Cumbria.

His attack on Nirex follows the publication by the Guardian of an internal minute written by the company's head of science, Dr John Holmes, in which he said the safety case for the project could not currently be made. There was not sufficient data available despite a pro-

gramme costing £200 million.

Mr Gummer is about to make a decision on whether to grant planning permission for the 1,000-foot deep laboratory.

This follows a six-months-long planning inquiry which ended a year ago.

If underground tests in the laboratory prove successful, a full-scale disposal facility would be constructed costing £2 billion by 2015, but not until another inquiry had tested the safety case.

In his 2,500-word letter Sir John says that his committee

was rebuked by Nirex when it raised fears about the safety case. "To my knowledge, Dr Holmes' minute reflects a starkly different assessment of the likelihood of achieving an acceptable safety case for a deep depository for radioactive waste at Sellafield, as compared to any that has been published, or said publicly by Nirex previously."

"Dr Holmes' evidence to the public inquiry contains no inking as to these profound reservations as to the adequacy of the safety assessment programme."

During the committee's many discussions with Nirex, at which such issues were frequently raised, Nirex consistently denied their validity.

Mr Gummer should think again before granting planning permission because to collect the data required to make out a safety case "would take several years".

If permission was given, there would be uncertainty "for many years into the future" whether there was enough scientific evidence to justify a safety case.

Michael Meacher, Labour's

environment spokesman, who was given a copy of Sir John's letter, said: "Sir John has exposed a history of complacency, misinformation and delay around the planning process for the rock laboratory."

"He has made it quite clear that the Government's own advisers have been warning about weaknesses in Nirex's research for many years."

Harold Beale, head of disposals systems at Nirex, denied any attempt had ever been made to mislead the committee or the inquiry.

Booksale parts Pooh and George

Dan Glatzer, Arts Correspondent and Lisa Buckingham, City Editor

THOMAS the Tank Engine and Winnie the Pooh have fared well to their old friends George Orwell and Umberto Eco this week.

The four giants of literature, who until this week shared the same parent company, were separated as Reed Publishing sold its literary imprints to Random House.

The sale includes some of the best-known names in fiction publishing, as well as some of the best-known writers and consolidates Random House's position as the United Kingdom's leading

publisher of fiction.

Under the £20 million sale, Reed has disposed of Secker and Warburg, Heinemann, Methuen, Milner, Mandarin and Sinclair-Stevenson to Random House.

But the undoubted star in the package bought by Random House is Secker and Warburg, whose list of authors contains a string of recent Booker Prize winners and includes Roddy Doyle, Umberto Eco, David Lodge, James Kelman and Hilary Mantel. Random House already owns Cape, which publishes Martin Amis, Salman Rushdie and Anita Brookner; Chatto, which publishes A.S. Byatt; Century, which has Michael Crichton and John Grisham; and Hutchinson, publishers of Robert Harris

and Stephen Fry.

The acquisition — which leaves Reed with the majority of its consumer books division still to sell — immediately sparked speculation that some of the best known imprints would be closed to avoid a clash. Secker & Warburg, for instance, will find itself nestled against the very similarly styled Cape and Chatto & Windus imprints.

The deal is understood to have been prompted by a last-minute auction sparked by rival Penguin. It looks likely to give Random House more than a tenth of the UK adult fiction market and should raise the company's British sales to about £125 million a year.

Gail Rebeck, chairman and chief executive of Random

House UK — part of the giant privately owned US empire controlled by the Newhouse family — declined to comment on whether any imprint would be closed down.

"It's an agreement in principle but we're all terribly excited," she said. "We look forward to welcoming the Reed authors." There has been speculation that some Reed authors may change publishers because of uncertainty prompted by the sale.

She said the fit between both sets of publishing labels was good, adding that she hoped the acquisition would fuel Random's recent 50 per cent growth record in Britain.

The sale may be a symptom of the decline of the Net Book Agreement, used to set minimum prices for some titles.

Home Office to axe over 1,200 civil service jobs

Alan Travis Home Affairs Editor

MORE than 1,200 civil service jobs are to be axed as part of a £105 million computerisation of the Home Office immigration and asylum cases.

The jobs will disappear over two years starting next spring, and represent about one in five of the Home Office's administrative civil servants. Officials claim that introduction of a computer system will save up to 40 per cent of the annual cost of tackling the backlog of 55,000 asylum cases.

The computer will spell the end of Whitehall's most in-

amous bureaucratic "swamp" at Lunar House, in Croydon, south London, when it is introduced later this year. Officials hope to cut the time to determine each application from an average eight months to several weeks.

All case notes in the Home Office's Immigration and Nationality Division are held on paper in huge stacks of files. Cases can become bogged down for years.

When a letter arrives, civil servants have to hunt through the halls of files, and officials admit that essential correspondence can become "detached".

The resulting delays have caused repeated protests from immigration detainees, including this week's hunger strikers at Rochester Prison.

Controversy flares as Democrats admit to using First Lady's secret White House files to raise funds

Clintons run for cover again

Richard Thomas
in Washington

THE controversy over political fund-raising intensified in Washington yesterday after leading Democrats admitted they had used an official White House database, nicknamed "big brother", to identify potential donors.

The confidential list of White House visitors and contacts — which has grown to 350,000 names since being launched at Hillary Clinton's insistence in 1993 at a cost to taxpayers of \$638,000 (\$200,000) — had been ruled out of bounds for party political use by White House law-

yers. The revelation puts the Clintons under fire for the second time over the use of official White House documents, after an investigation last summer into the misuse of FBI files on existing and former White House security staff, which were given to party activists.

The former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, Truman Arnold, said in an interview with the Los Angeles Times that he had used the file to ensure that donors were rewarded with treats such as invitations to White House dinners, trips aboard Air Force One, or overnight stays in Lincoln's bedroom.

"It was helpful to us because we were looking to the disaffected," the Texas oil

magnate said. "That database told us who had been invited to what. It didn't seem to be very privileged to me. It was open to a lot of people."

With Republicans gleefully lighting on some much-needed distraction from Newt

and Mr Gingrich's improper acceptance of charitable funds for political purposes, pressure has grown for tighter controls on fund-raising. On Thursday, the Republican-dominated government affairs committee approved

"The database was probably the central brain in their effort to sell the White House in the re-election campaign," he said.

The list started with political supporters and members of the Clinton "rapid response" political attack team of experts, but grew to include everyone attending functions, funding Senate campaigns and even the president's jogging partners.

But a White House spokesman, Barry Toltz, insisted that the purpose of "big brother" was innocent — that it was used by staff organising receptions, and dinners. When the Clintons entered the White House in 1993, Mrs Clinton was apparently horrified by the antiquated guest

tracking system used, and ordered a new version to be installed — a taxpayer-funded initiative which remained secret until a Washington newspaper learnt of its existence last year.

A 1993 letter from Marsha Scott, the long-time Clinton friend put in charge of the project, to the chief of staff, Thomas McLarty, reads: "As you know I am working on a master database in the White House. The president and first lady want this done."

President Clinton will take part in a two-day summit with European Union leaders in the Netherlands from May 28, the White House said yesterday. He was expected to visit other European countries during his trip.

The official database was used to ensure that donors were rewarded with treats

Gingrich's reprimand for unethical use of funds, Mrs Clinton sought to distance herself from the project, while staff insisted the list had only been used for social purposes.

With the latest row coming after criticism of Asian contributions to the Democrats,

the setting up of a \$5.5 million task force to investigate how political influence is being bought.

Republican David McIntosh, accused the Clintons of breaching the divide between official government business and party political activity.

For decades the cold war prevented victims of Nazism living in east and central Europe from receiving compensation from the German government, and they are still treated as a low priority.

Ian Traynor in Bonn reports on a discrimination made worse by Bonn's generous pensions to SS veterans



Survivors of the Czech ghetto at Theresienstadt, north of Prague, are still battling for German compensation

PHOTOGRAPH: WIENER LIBRARY

Victims condemned to ghetto of penury

TWO months ago Tomas Kraus walked into the German embassy in Prague on the latest round of his long journey to win compensation for 2,000 Czech Jewish Holocaust survivors.

Mr Kraus, executive director of the federation of Czech Jewish communities, had raised the matter several times with the German foreign minister, Klaus Kinkel, and written to the chancellor, Helmut Kohl.

"The ambassador is a very nice man. Privately, he said he was sorry, but he had to tell me that there was nothing foreseen for Czech Jews," Mr Kraus said. The letter to Mr Kohl, he was told, had been "lost".

While tens of thousands of Nazi SS veterans, many of them alleged war criminals, have been drawing generous war pensions from the German government for decades, thousands of their victims who survived the camps and ghettos of eastern Europe have been left penniless.

Those in the East have been regarded as a low priority in the settlement of war claims, while their counterparts in the West have — for political reasons — been much more generously treated.

In the Latvian capital Riga,

for example, survivors of the Jews herded into the ghetto get nothing from the German government, although many of their locally-recruited Waffen-SS guards receive German war pensions.

"There's such a contrasting inequity between the two groups," said Rabbi Andrew Baker, director of the European department of the American Jewish Committee in Washington.

A German television documentary broadcast on Thursday night alleged that Bonn paid more than DM600 million (\$230 million) last year in "victims' pensions" to an estimated 50,000 war criminals and former members of military units described as criminal by the Nuremberg tribunal.

"The figure is quite credi-

ble, not at all surprising," said Willi Drensen, head of Germany's main Nazi-hunting unit, the Central Justice Office in Ludwigsburg. "But I'd call them Nazi criminals, not war criminals."

Meanwhile Holocaust survivors in the three Baltic republics, the Balkans, and much of central Europe are denied compensation.

"We favour measures for meaningful compensation for residents in eastern Europe. The German government has not yet acted on this," said Saul Kagan, the vice-president in New York of the Jewish Claims Conference, which has negotiated and administered Holocaust compensation funds since the 1950s.

The beneficiaries of the war pensions identified by the documentary include some

notorious high-ranking Nazis and a proven mass murderer.

For many years the widows of Reinhard Heydrich and Roland Freisler were among them.

Heydrich, assassinated by Czechs, was an SS leader and "plenipotentiary for the final solution of the Jewish question". He chaired the Wannsee conference in 1942 which plotted the Holocaust.

Freisler, who died in a bombing raid in 1944, attended the conference as a key figure in the Nazi judiciary and president of the Nazi "people's courts".

A former Wehrmacht officer, Wolfgang Lehnigk-Schaden, who lives near Koblenz, has been drawing £270 a month in disability pension for years. An Italian court sentenced him to life impris-

onment in absentia in 1994 for ordering the 1943 massacre of 22 Italians, mostly women and children, but a German court freed him under a statute of limitations, which sets a 30-year limit on trial for murder.

German government figures revealed this week that 883 Germans living in Argentina, Brazil and Chile — havens for Nazis fleeing after the war — received German welfare payments in 1995. "That raises certain suspicions," Mr Drensen said.

German compensation payments to Holocaust victims are largely regulated by bilateral deals with other countries, which receive lump sums from Bonn and then distribute the funds. Although eastern Europe was the main site of the Hol-

ocaust, the cold war prevented arrangements with most of the old Soviet bloc.

The end of the cold war and German unification led to agreements with Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. But these agreements provided for small one-off payments to victims resident in the east, while Holocaust survivors who have emigrated to the west qualify for monthly pensions of DM500. There are still no agreements with the Baltic republics and the Czechs, Slovaks, Romanians and Bulgarians.

A German Green MP, Volker Beck, tabled a parliamentary motion on Thursday demanding prompt government action on "this politically and morally unacceptable situation".

"Holocaust survivors today have to leave their native lands and emigrate west to get reasonable compensation from Germany for the persecution they suffered," the motion said. "The Jewish victims resident in eastern Europe... have been excluded from compensation for almost 50 years."

Rabbi Baker said: "If the German government was serious about correcting this wrong, it would be different. As it is, it's hard not to be cynical."

Thousands denied the pensions their persecutors enjoy

Of the 1.1 million Germans and non-Germans getting war pensions, up to 50,000 are suspected of having been involved in war crimes, according to the television documentary.

The Waffen-SS and military police veterans drawing German war pensions include 459 people in Brit-

ain, mostly from eastern Europe. In addition to British state pensions, they get an average £2,500 a year from Germany.

German law prevented individual compensation claims from survivors of the millions used as wartime slave labour until the

supreme court ruled last year that individual claims were permissible. A Bonn court is considering a test case which could open the floodgates.

Between 1945 and 1995, Germany paid about DM93 billion in compensation to Nazi victims.



Carlo Jagemetti: Attacked media for distorting the truth

Swiss envoy defends war record

Richard Thomas
in Washington

CARLO JAGMETTI, the Swiss ambassador, forced to resign after describing his country's role with Jewish groups over the hoarding of Holocaust victims' assets as a "war that has to be won", launched a spirited defence yesterday of his actions and the war record of the government.

Describing the tactless metaphor he used in a memo to his government as an innocent attempt to prompt a quick response, he said: "Regrettably, harsh language is sometimes required to get results. My words were a call to the Swiss to get their act together. I am not a warrior."

Giving a press conference in Washington, Mr Jagmetti accused the media and un-

named pressure groups of distorting the truth and using selected information to unjustly portray him and the Swiss government as having acted in an improper or even anti-Semitic fashion.

United States politicians, led by the New York Republican senator Alfonse D'Amato, have lent their weight to calls by international Jewish bodies for the repayment of up to \$7 billion (\$4.4 billion) belonging to Holocaust victims, which they claim is being hoarded in Switzerland.

The outgoing Swiss president, Jean-Pascal Delamuraz, inflamed the uncomfortable relationship between Switzerland and the Jewish community at the beginning of the year when he complained that the Swiss were being "blackmailed".

Yesterday Mr Jagmetti tried to shore up Switzer-

land's diplomatic image, which has also been tarnished by accusations that Swiss banks are sitting on gold looted by Nazi troops.

The Swiss National Bank (SNB), the country's central bank, tried to blunt attacks on its decision to receive gold from the Hitler regime by insisting yesterday that other officially neutral states had also taken deposits.

Its spokesman, Werner Abegg, said the bank had uncovered files proving that Sweden had accepted gold stolen from Belgium. "It is incorrect that Switzerland was the only neutral country to take gold from the German Reichsbank," he said.

Mr Jagmetti said genuine efforts were being made to recover stolen gold and unclaimed assets. "The government of Switzerland will not rest until the complete and

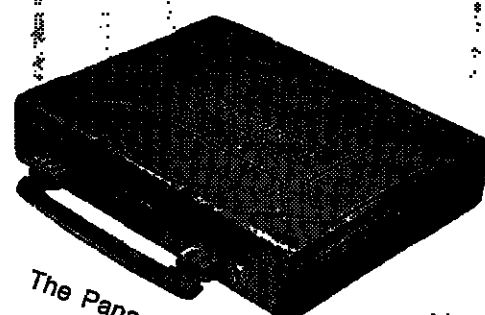
unvarnished truth is laid out before the eyes of the world."

His staunch defence came as Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, and President Arnold Koller of Switzerland agreed last night in Davos to try and calm Swiss and Jewish emotions over the re-examination of second world war wrongs.

During a meeting at the world economic summit, Mr Koller expressed deep regret to Mr Netanyahu for the "monstrous, unspeakable wrong" of the Holocaust. He said a calmer atmosphere would help the work of two international commissions set up by Switzerland to investigate Swiss actions toward Jews and Nazis before, during and after the war.

Martin Woolcott, page 6; Swiss banks' guilty secrets, page 12

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Demise of Morse code

A tried and tested system that has been in use for 100 years is being scrapped. But its death has raised concerns for safety, writes **Alex Duval Smith** in Le Conquet, while **Owen Bowcott** finds that cost has played a part



Le Conquet coastal station in western Brittany (left) sent its valedictory messages last night, monitored by Bruce Morris in mid-Wales (right), who bemoans the end of an era PHOTOGRAPHS: CLAUDE GRANDMONTAGNE

SOS: Is anybody out there any more?

Silent key, as 'a living history' disappears into the ether

IT IS too late for a ... (SOS), and most people were deaf to the chorus of dots and dashes filling the air last night as the shipping world sent a last salute to Ariel Straboni and the other Morse code operators on the westernmost tip of Brittany.

But at 23.48 GMT, from their windswept base on the cliffs at Le Conquet, Mr Straboni and his team sent a historic message: "This is our final cry on 500kHz before eternal silence. Best wishes to all remaining on air. Goodbye from all at FFU. Silent key forever."

At midnight last night, FFU — the Morse code call-sign signifying France-Ushant — ceased to be a reference point for dexterous sailors in a radius of 1,000 kilometres (621 miles). In its 100th year, that lifesaving combination of the index finger and the electromagnetic telegraph have been deemed obsolete.

But Mr Straboni, a radio operator at Le Conquet for 18 years, had his doubts. "No one can argue that Morse is better than satellite navigation, but it has many advantages and can still be a last resort when all other equipment fails. Indeed, that was the case in 1978 when the Amoco Cadiz hit the rocks

here with its 200,000 tonnes of crude oil," he said.

France Telecom, which owns the maritime communications station, sees things differently. As part of a worldwide agreement to launch a Global Maritime Distress Satellite System in 1998, it has followed the lead of the United States and Germany in scrapping Morse code. The last Morse services in France — Le Conquet and Boulogne — closed last night. British coastal stations will follow suit soon.

To make its point about modernity, France Telecom yesterday dispatched its director of international mobile telephone services to this treeless Breton peninsula.

"Morse is nothing to get all sentimental about," said René Gourey, fresh from Paris. "On February 4, France Telecom launches a new Inmarsat faxphone. Calls will cost \$3 a minute and the phone and aerial are the size of a laptop computer."

But Mr Straboni, aged 40, and the 24 other operators at Le Conquet would have liked a more dignified send-off for the last communications system still named after its American inventor, Samuel Morse.

"Next week, we are each being given three hours' training so we can provide cus-

tomers services' to users of satellite phones. Morse takes six months' training and years of experience. Its demise means ships are increasingly being staffed by untrained crew," Mr Straboni said.

Those ships that still use Morse are mainly Asian or eastern European. Jean-Claude Bruyères, a radio operator at Le Conquet since 1978, said: "We mostly used English words and one of Morse's greatest benefits was that it allowed us to understand one another."

Mr Bruyères hoped for lots of 73s (best wishes) and maybe some 88s (love and kisses) when FFU went off the air. "If we are lucky there will be a woman operator working somewhere. When Stonehaven [north-east Scotland] closed, hundreds of 88s were flying through the ether because there was a woman on duty."

How did he know the operator was a woman? "Every one's touch is different," he said.

Even though no jobs are being lost at Le Conquet, Mr Straboni said operators were not being replaced. Ultimately, he believed, European navigation — by satellite — would be controlled from a single base.

Additional research by Charlotte Pham.

THE disappearance of Morse code listening stations around the world will deprive shipping of a reliable safety net, a British radio expert has warned.

France's valedictory stream of dots and dashes from the Breton coast last night was being recorded in mid-Wales by Bruce Morris, aged 52, who is chronicling the end of a technological era.

With coastal stations round the globe steadily switching from manually-operated Morse code to

automated satellite alarms, Britain's remaining distress watch could be ended by the end of this year.

"When the last — perhaps Reykjavik, or Norway — go off air in 1999, I shall urge them to send: 'I am a voice crying in the wilderness'," Mr Morris said yesterday. "After that date no one will be listening. It's all down to cost. It's more expensive to run a system with skilled operators."

"As a result of new technology, this tried and tested form of communication will be phased out. It is being taken over by auto-

mated systems which may not work."

Since modern emergency alarms are programmed to go off at the push of a button, Mr Morris claims they are often ignored by coast-guard stations unless recorded several times.

"In Hong Kong, for example, they wait for an hour and a half until the satellite has reappeared, and if the beacon has moved on, as though the ship were steaming forward, they ignore it."

Responsible for saving the lives of thousands of sailors and fishermen since

Marconi developed a transatlantic network of telegraph stations in the early 1900s, the distress watch operated globally on the frequency 500kHz.

The International Maritime Organisation introduced a new standard in 1992, the satellite Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), and the United States abandoned Morse code watch-keeping on 500kHz the next year.

Subject to consultation, the six UK coastal stations will discontinue their service on December 31.

Last month's rescue of Tony Bullimore, the British yachtsman, in the Southern Ocean was possible only because his emergency beacon was picked up by satellite, a Department of Transport spokeswoman said.

To Mr Morris, however, a former ship's radio operator, the professional camaraderie of the airwaves is about to dissolve into the ether.

"People might see me as a sad nutter recording the demise of an era, but it is living history which is disappearing," he said.

It's good to dot and dash

Best wishes
Love and kisses
Get stuffed
Good morning old man
Thank you, see you
Silent key (end of msg)
Come quickly (start of msg)

73
88
(comma)
GM OM
TU SU
SK
CQ

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You can pray
don't have to

Ivo De Souza

Unwavering voice against racism

IN THE 1940s Ivo De Souza, who has died aged 78, was a distinguished Royal Air Force Mosquito pilot; in the 1950s he created a welfare service to help West Indian immigrants find their feet in Britain, and from the 1960s until the late 1970s he was a notable Jamaican diplomat. Warm, charming, energetic, he helped shape contemporary British and Caribbean society.

Born in Kingston into a middle-class family, Ivo was one of the West Indian generation who answered Churchill's call to the Empire to help defeat Hitler. Volunteering as a RAF pilot in 1941, he trained in Canada and in 1942 to 1945 flew Mosquito fighter bombers with the 2nd Tactical Air Force. His sorties included night missions against German fighters and low-level daylight bombing raids. Ivo piloted one of the Mosquitoes in the daring attack on Gestapo headquarters in Copenhagen which destroyed the building while ensuring that 39 Danish hostages held in its cells could escape.

After the war Ivo considered continuing with an RAF career but took a degree in public administration from Manchester University instead. There he met fellow student Joan Morris, who became his wife.

He then joined government service in Jamaica but returned to London in the early 1950s to set up the British Caribbean Welfare Service. The Colonial Office had given Ivo the job of finding out exactly how many people were on their way to Britain — then about 2,000 a year — how and when they would be arriving, and of liaising with government departments and



Ivo formed a lobbying organisation to counter racist attacks from the likes of fascist leader Sir Oswald Mosley

voluntary organisations to ensure they settled in. Employment was not the problem but accommodation was. Ivo organised West Indian student volunteers — who included P J Patterson, now Jamaica's prime minister — to ensure new arrivals had somewhere to go and enlisted the Church and Salvation Armies to provide warm clothes and blankets.

As immigration levels increased towards 20,000 a year in the mid-1950s, and mutterings about the need for restrictions were heard, so

In 1962 when Jamaica became a self-governing country within the Commonwealth Ivo joined its diplomatic service as Deputy High Commissioner in Canada. By the mid-1960s he was based at the external relations ministry. At the United Nations he pursued Jamaica's radical agenda, urging the imposition of sanctions against apartheid South Africa, pressing for a just international order for developing countries, and placing his diplomatic skills behind the world non-alignment.

Two years later the now-retired Ivo was an official observer at Zimbabwe's first free elections. Until failing health impeded him, Ivo also indulged in his favourite pastimes of archaeology, cricket — he followed the West Indies team on several tours — and travel. He also retained his interest in the British West Indian community and was concerned at high youth unemployment. In a conversation a few months ago he was highly critical of those who had built middle class careers, yet ignored the plight of their fellow blacks in Britain.

Ivo's friends were of every nationality, colour and creed. But as someone who sought practical solutions to problems he thought the black community in Britain should organise its own institutions. Why, he asked, when black sportsmen and entertainers have never been held in higher esteem in Britain, did they not organise a body to look after their interests? And he wanted to see associations of black teachers and black local government workers as building blocks for a multi-racial society based on mutual respect.

Ivo will also be remembered by Jamaica's writers and artists who knew there was always a welcome at the De Souza household. In Canada, he organised the National Dance Theatre of Jamaica's first overseas tour, and in Trinidad a major exhibition of Jamaican art.

He leaves his wife, Joan, and daughters, Massana and Irene.

Robin Rowan

Ivo De Souza, pilot and public servant, born August 24, 1918; died January 19, 1997

Carole Carr Glamour among the Goons

ALL, blonde, elegant, always exquisitely tailored, Carole Carr, who has died aged 68, charmed a generation with her "vocal refrains", as they were called, on 1940s dance-band broadcasts and records before becoming a television personality on panel games in the 1950s.

Always a pleasure to see and hear, the one big disappointment was her failure to become a film star. Her feature film, wherein she played one glamorous girl among a gang of Goons, was a low-budget quickie made in 1952. *Down Among the Z-Men* is occasionally revived because of its Goon Show cast, and is the only film starring all four comedians from the original radio show: Spike Milligan, Harry Secombe, Peter Sellers and Michael Bentine. Cheap and cheerful as it was, the film made a second showing for Carr, who sings the title tune and a ballad, *If This Is Love*, under the not inappropriate cast name of Carole Gayle.

Carr was the younger sister of Dorothy Carr, an equally delightful but somewhat less successful singer from the 1930s. Although



Carole Carr... failed as a film star

PHOTOGRAPH BY HALTON

Dorothy had faded away by the 1950s, Carole shortened her surname so that she was not seen to be cashing in on her big sister's fame and name.

Born in London, she left school aged 14 and went to the Royal Academy of Music and Dramatic Art for a short while. Determined to follow in her sister's footsteps, she auditioned for the top band-leader of the day, Jack Payne. Delighted at the maturity of the teenager's tones, he promptly signed her up and she broadcast with him regularly, cutting her first record with his band in February 1945. It was *I'm Thinking*

Tonight Of My Blue Eyes, and she was backed by Payne's vocal group, The Crackerjacks. At the end of her Payne period she was contracted by Gerald, who had taken over top position from Payne when the latter decided to disband his orchestra. Now her recording career really took off, waxing such broadcasting favourites as *I'm A Little On The Lonely Side*, *All Of A Sudden My Heart Sings*, and *Did You Ever Get That Feeling In The Moonlight*. She also recorded the occasional duet with Gerald's male star, Len Carter, including *Chewing A Piece Of Straw*.

Carole's radio days boomed. *Calling All Forces*, the top one-hour weekly variety series which had begun in 1930 was due for a shake-up in 1939. For the new series, with cheerful Charlie Chester and Tony Hancock replacing Ted Ray as Comedians-in-Charge, Carole Carr came in to replace Petula Clark in the role of Forces sweetheart, singing songs requested by servicemen. This role led to a tour of the Far East entertaining the troops.

With the growth of television, Carole entered a new career as a panel game personality, bringing her glamour (in black-and-white only) to the team of *Find The Link*. She appeared in her only other film, the Boulton Brothers production of *Left, Right And Centre* (1959) as herself, with her fellow panelists, Josephine Douglas, Gilbert Harding and chairman Kenneth Anderson.

In 1949 she married Peter Lewin, an airline executive, and when he was sent to the USA as a sales manager she went with him. This exile lasted three years and virtually ended her career in show business. When he suffered a stroke she decided to make her retirement official and they moved to a cottage in Hemerton where she cared for her husband and their garden.

A year ago she was told she had contracted cancer, and now she has died. By a wry twist of fate, Peter has survived her.

Dennis Gifford

Carole Carr, singer and actress, born March 26, 1928; died January 8, 1997

Face to Faith You can pray but you don't have to pay

Bob Holman

GUILT provoked by religion carries a heavy burden. It is associated with titles of monks begging themselves and western businessmen to atone for their guilt before God. American televangelists play on viewers' guilt to induce contributions. "You know you should do something for the Lord, well, you can pray and you can pay," Professor Gary Collins in his *Evangelicalism* says of guilt. "No other issue so consistently pervades all the problem areas discussed in this book."

academic friend, who frequently denounced the amount of poverty in Britain, felt guilty that he still drew a large salary. His guilt did not change his lifestyle. It just made him more miserable.

Suddenly it was my turn to be at the receiving end of guilt feelings. I first met Bron 30 years ago when, as a student, she would introduce herself as, "I'm Bron, I'm a socialist and an agnostic." Twenty years later she phoned to announce, "You won't believe this, I've become a Christian."

still sending money to El Salvador. "As a socialist I gave 10 per cent of my salary," she says. "As a Christian, where do you stop? They are God's people so I give everything."

I do not live as frugally as Bron. I do not give my possessions away to the same extent. Compared with her I can feel a failure and that guilt can depress me. Wrongly so.

Whatever the saints seem to demand of us, my understanding is that God does not expect us to be penniless hermits racked by guilt. Jesus was not a pauper. He lived modestly but enjoyed parties. He dwelt amongst the most needy, but did not reject the wealthy. The Bible records that Jesus loved the rich young ruler and exhorted him to distribute his riches amongst the poor. The deduction I draw is that Jesus does not order us into poverty, but rather into promoting a more equal society avoiding both extreme poverty and extreme wealth.

DURING the freezing January in Glasgow, I came across a lone mother and her kids in a damp flat with no other heating than a single bar electric fire. Nearby, on a Saturday afternoon, I visited a couple and their kids who were huddled in bed because they did not want to use up their one remaining electricity card until nearer the day when their next Giro would arrive.

My response does not have to be a cringing guilt because I am not cold. Immediately it has to be the individual one of enabling them to obtain another card and, in the longer term, I can work with them to see if their housing and income can be improved within the system. We do not need to shoulder a guilt that drives us into destitution. We do need a love for God that moves us into sharing with others.

We should use the example of others — people like Bron — to inspire not inhibit us, to take on board their principles in their detailed practice. I visited some friends who are in long-term poverty. They had 15p to last until the next Giro. They refused to spend it and that evening put it in the collection plate at the Salvation Army. They gave their all and I — who could easily slip in a fiver — might feel guilty that I did not give everything. But I do not. Rather I can feel encouraged by their demonstration that God is active in their lives. My guilt should be less a personal and more a societal one that our society allows people like them to be in poverty while millions are in affluence. They encourage me to continue to strive for a better Britain. I hope that the inspiring example of individuals combined with widespread societal guilt will lead to a more equal society.

Bob Holman lives in Easterhouse, Glasgow. His book, *Equality: A Christian Manifesto* will be published by SPCK in the summer.

Appreciation: Cecil Lewis

John Theodorakis writes:

TO BE a friend of Cecil Lewis (obituary, January 29) was to know a favourite of the gods. The man was unique. Lucky in his good looks, lucky in war, lucky in his alert and rewarding longevity; lucky in his third wife, Fanny, lucky, perhaps, in his many failures too. A Bucarest, charismatic figure; but genuinely puzzled and greatly amused by his long and inconsequential "weather-vane" life. Aviator, MC, flying trainer in China, co-founder of

the BBC's Uncle Ruckardus in Children's Hour; farmer in Eastern Transvaal; playwright; Oscar winner; carpenter; Don Juan; novelist, inter alia. It's an absurd CV.

Yet there was nothing absurd about the charming, courteous, straightforward and self-deprecating Cecil. On the terrace of the little house he himself built in Corfu, he talked about his assignment to outfit the Red Baron in his brand new SE5 fighter. The telling was so clear, amusing and without a trace of braggadocio, that I thought I

might just as easily have done it myself. Appropriately, what brought me to him was a Radio 3 feature about his friendship in his young days with the artist Charles Ricketts. Cecil was his own narrative, and Sir John Gielgud played the lead. Gielgud recalled meeting Ricketts in 1925, when he was in *The High Constantine's Wife*, a one-act play, by someone or other, produced by Lewis Casson, with sets by Ricketts. Cecil roared with laughter: "Do you realise," he said, "that the



loses his untaxable status when he loses her. Hundreds of episodes to run yet...

Today's other birthdays: Don Everly, rock singer, 60; Eliza

author of that play was one Cecil Lewis? Gielgud was then a promising young actor of 21, and Cecil, at 27, a first world war veteran and the BBC Director of Programmes.

Cecil was all enthusiasm: a wise child with a sense of wonder, curiosity and adventure. I was moved, but not surprised, to learn that, in hospital, as he awaited his end, he was reading, or being read to, *Treasure Island*. Cecil relished the gift of life, and enriched and enhanced the lives of all those who loved and admired him.

John Fordham

George Handy (Joseph Handelman), musician, born January 17, 1920; died January 8, 1997

Death Notices

COADY, On the 29th January after a severe illness borne with great courage, Josephine Coady, nee Turner, 72, of 10, St. Mary's Road, died. She was the widow of the late Mr. J. Coady. Burial in the Methodist United Reform Church, Haverhill, on Friday 7th March at 11.30am to remember him.

Acknowledgments

Victoria and Charlotte Galt, and Denise would like to thank all of the friends of the late Charles Galt for attending his funeral service. We know that some of you travelled from far and wide. This send off would have been a very happy many thanks to Rev. Jim Warner for his kind words and support. Please do let us know and we will be most grateful. Please accept this as our only but sincere acknowledgement. He will be sadly missed.

Births

SEADON, Penelope Madeline Kitchell Kitchell, born on 27 December 1968 to Penelope Kitchell and Alexander Seadon. She is the daughter of the late Mr. Seadon. Please let us know and we will be most grateful. Please accept this as our only but sincere acknowledgement. He will be sadly missed.

DAVISON, Laura, aged 32 years, of Riverside Mental Health Trust, was killed tragically in a road accident on Monday 27th January 1997. Funeral service to take place on Thursday 30th February 1997 at 10.30am in St. John's Church, Doncaster. Please let us know and we will be most grateful. Please accept this as our only but sincere acknowledgement. He will be sadly missed.

Enter the new age of digital TV

BSkyB and rivals join together

DIGITAL broadcasting through the existing terrestrial system received an almost embarrassingly large vote of confidence yesterday as the giants of the industry — Carlton, Granada and BSkyB — joined forces with the BBC to bid for the rights to run 30 new television channels. They are hoping this is an offer that the Independent Television Commission won't be able to resist. The only other bid is from Digital Television Network, an American backed cable group which promises "world-class" programmes from ITN, leading Hollywood studios and specialist providers. This is a strong endorsement of Virginia Bottomley's faith in the future of digital terrestrial television which offers a lot of improvements — incremental rather than revolutionary — like sharper pictures, more channels (many of them subscription based) and, if linked to the telephone or radio system, a limited amount of interactivity: this could enable viewers to indulge in television shopping, home banking or voting in opinion polls. Digital technology — in which pictures and sound are converted into the 1s and 0s of computer code — enables images to be manipulated more easily (like football matches seen from different angles) and will greatly widen consumer choice. Unlike satellite transmission which requires a reception dish, all that is needed is a "plug in and watch" attachment to the aerial socket of existing TV sets.

This may be one of the reasons why BSkyB (40 per cent owned by Rupert Murdoch) has bought a 33 per cent stake in the new consortium — called British Digital Broadcasting — despite having made disparaging noises about digital terrestrial earlier. Sky's presence will boost the chances of BDB being a commercial success and will also enable Sky to use its new terrestrial channels as a "beacon" for the 200-plus premium satellite channels it is planning. Until details of the applications are published we won't know whether the potential problem of Sky dominating access to the set-top boxes providing the gateway to digital TV has been resolved, but because so many major players have joined forces it suggests a happier outcome than seemed likely even a few months ago.

If the BDB bid is successful it will also go some way towards resolving the other tantalising question — which technology will eventually dominate the information revolution? In theory, cable with its huge capacity for two-way communications for up to a thousand channels, ought to be predominant but the best technology rarely wins these races and no one has yet worked out what to do with a thousand channels. In any case cable still hasn't got a big enough customer base. As BDB pointed out yesterday, three-quarters of British homes do not subscribe to cable or satellite services. That is the market the new company will go for by offering 30 channels including four extra ones from the BBC. Yesterday's announcement has undoubtedly boosted the commercial potential of digital terrestrial broadcasting. BSkyB has shrewdly taken out an each-way bet and the consumer can sit back and wait to be positively spoiled by choice.

Rain that didn't fall

A water shortage demands restraint

DROUGHT is no respecter of seasons. The driest January since 1779 will barely have been noticed by most of us who have lived through last month. We associate droughts with headlines containing the words "Pheasant" and "Scorcher": dry weather in mid-winter is considerably more welcome. But the figures reported from the Met Office are catastrophic and should be taken very seriously. London, with 12.1 millimetres of rain compared to the 30-year average (1961-90) of 43.7, has suffered less than elsewhere. Manchester had one-ninth of its average rainfall for the same period, Cardiff an unbelievable one-thirty-seventh. Overall England and Wales have enjoyed less than 18 per cent of the average of 88 millimetres, which sends a clear drought warning for coming years as well as this one.

The application by some water companies to extract water from rivers during the winter poses a difficult problem. Many rivers already suffer from over-extraction which has led to the drying out of wetland sites, the narrowing of channels, and has damaged many natural habitats. The argument here is that the water which will otherwise head for the sea can be diverted into reservoirs and even underground. But though the water industry in Kent and East Sussex has been warned that summer extraction will not be allowed, the fear must be that it will happen. If extraction takes place as a result of a drought order now, how can it be resisted when the sun is higher in the sky? The general trend of over-extraction has been clear since the National Rivers Authority sounded the alarm five years ago. Two years later it proclaimed confidently that existing supply was more than sufficient to meet demand and that new pipelines and reservoirs which had been planned could now be postponed. The dry summers since then have made such optimism ridiculous. Last year's slight recovery still left Yorkshire, one of the worst affected areas, with reservoirs at only 48 per cent of capacity.

Within the next couple of decades drought is likely to become a frequent preoccupation in Britain — and a permanent threat in many other areas of the world. From the Okavango to the Brahmaputra, and from the Rio Grande to the Yellow River, the silt is rising and the flow decreasing. The World Bank has estimated that by 2025, the amount of water available to each person in the Middle East and North Africa will have dropped by 80 per cent. Faced with these global changes, some of Britain's water preoccupations seem incredibly petty. The privatised water companies should certainly keep their charges down and re-invest more of their profits. But Ofwat's pressure on companies to pass on savings to consumers is beside the point. The sum of £1.30 off an annual household bill means very little as such: it should be aggregated for more investment in promoting water economies. Public reluctance to accept cuts by companies which have handed out obscene rewards to their own directors is understandable. But it is time to exercise a little more social restraint: no one has a sacred claim to water, a useless patch of lawn, or to shampoo a car which makes its own contribution to global warming and climate change. God-given rights can be taken away by intervention from the heavens: that is what is happening to our water now.

Letters to the Editor

Labour shows internal dissent

HUGO Young's account of the document presented to Labour's NEC, A Framework For Partnership, cannot have been grounded on fact (Of the leader, by the leader, for the leader, January 30).

First, the NEC agreed that the proposals constituted a "basis for consultation" in the party at large; many recommendations are tentative and much remains to be determined. Second, the document has been prepared and issued by the NEC and not by the party leader. Third, the document is based on a proposed joint commitment to partnership by the party and a future Labour government. Fourth, the proposals embrace a series of practical arrangements for consultation and communication between the party and such a government. Fifth, the party conference will remain the "sovereign policy-making and decision-making body of the party" in a much strengthened and empowered form. Sixth, the NEC will lose none of

its powers, nor any of its current constituents (including the unions), but groups not presently represented will get that opportunity. The aim is to provide a more involved party, looking outwards to its voters and supporters as well as inwards to more inclusive and co-operative practices.

The proposals are now open to democratic discussion in the party. I urge members and affiliates to read the document, consider its proposals and come forward with their own ideas.

(Prof) R H Fryer, Advisor, Party Into Power Project, Northern College, Wentworth Castle, Stainborough, Barnsley S75 3ET.

ONE of the most important principles of democracy within the Labour Party is that ordinary members can propose a resolution at a local branch meeting which, having gone through a prescribed open and accountable process, could arrive on the floor of the conference and become party policy.

The interposing of the National Policy Forum, a closed body whose proceedings are a mystery to nearly everyone, as recommended by the Framework for Partnership document, is therefore not an attack on the party activists that Mr Blair says would "disproportionate powers" but on the ordinary members whom he claims to be enfranchising. It would, furthermore, make Labour even less democratic than the Tories, who still accept constituency resolutions at their conference. That this proposal received the support of six of the seven constituency section members of the NEC is indicative of the contempt that most of today's politicians have for democracy.

Simon McKee, 10 Murdoch House, Mordale Street, London SE16 1BJ.

IF Hugo Young expects a radical response by Labour MPs to the emasculated of the NEC and conference, he must have read different tea-leaves from

me. Since Labour Party policy seems to be made up from a series of "mix counter" in the Woolworths Of Ideas, only the floating voter, with no commitment or interest in the Labour Party, would appear to have a special place in the leadership's affections. It is ironic that it takes a ball-and-chain like the House of Lords to slow down legislation sufficiently for the Labour Party to catch up with it. The ditching of the powers of the NEC and conference are not signs of modernity or strength, but evidence that the leadership is unequal to debate, unclear of its purpose and determined to sequester itself where it cannot be disturbed by important members.

Peter Lendells, East Down, Clavon, Holsworthy, Devon EX22 9QF.

AS somebody who's been a delegate to several Labour conferences I wholeheartedly support the NEC's proposals. Conference has never been a good forum for constructive

policy discussion. Most delegates never get a chance to contribute, and ordinary party members don't have a look-in. Compositing meetings have always been a joke — throw 30 delegates into a schoolroom, stir in disparate resolutions and amendments, sprinkle with confusion, half-bake for an hour and serve a policy mish-mash.

The Policy Forum will have time to consider and amend resolutions, forming them into coherent reports. Scope for dissent will still be there (minority reports) and the Forum contains members from all sections of the party. Ben Wardle, 18G Compton Road, London N1 2PA.

NEW Labour's proposed partnership between the leadership and the party is similar to the partnership it seeks between employers and unions, that is, exploitative. Andy Walker, 120 Blythwood Road, Ilford, Essex IG3 8SG.

Care to make a profit?

NOT only does Sheila Lawlor paint a caricature of social services departments (Who will care for our children? January 30) but she is factually wrong on many counts.

Every social services committee manages a mixed economy of provision, but the mix varies from area to area for good reason. The voluntary sector will have particular strengths in one locality, whilst the commercial sector is inevitably more active in affluent areas.

The parallel Lawlor draws with Government changes to health, education and social security is interesting. In these three areas, the separation of the commissioning and providing functions may have brought benefits but both functions have remained within the public sector. Indeed, there is already substantial more involvement of independent providers in social services than in any of these other services.

An issue not addressed by Lawlor is the need to protect the civil rights of those involved. Social services departments discharge statutory responsibilities which include major interventions in people's lives. Whether relating to the protection of children, the assessment of some-

body's mental health, the supervision of a young offender, or the discharge of parents with child protection services. Still, there has to be a price for more efficient services. Paul Johnson, North British Housing Association, 384 Ashford Road, 32 Salisbury Road, Redland, Bristol BS6 7AT.

PRIVATISATION has brought about some benefits to some customers — for example, office cleaning. My car is cleaner, having gone through a private cleaners £2.50 an hour. Private residential care is cheaper than local authority care. The quality is generally as good (what the heck that care staff get £3 an hour). So, private the rest of social services, introduce competition to, for instance, child protection services. These services are very staff intensive and the staff have to be qualified, experienced and skilled — anyhow, go on introducing competition and squeeze the market. The result could be that qualified and experienced staff think it's definitely not worth it and off they go. So replace them with unqualified, less experienced

staff — result, cheaper services. Oh and, of course, more abuse investigations into parents who went wrong with child protection services. Still, there has to be a price for more efficient services. Paul Johnson, North British Housing Association, 384 Ashford Road, 32 Salisbury Road, Redland, Bristol BS6 7AT.

ONE of the recommendations in the recent report into Cambridgeshire Social Services was that there should be consolidation rather than change if services were to improve.

The cynical nature of the proposed sell-off was exposed by the social services director in Kent, which is to put all residential and day care services into the private sector, when he admitted that the savings of £2 per hour in the pay rates are the main attractions to privatisation. We should not be fooled by free-market government propaganda who are not the slightest bit interested in social services, only in what is spent on them. John Baranclough, School of Social Work, University of North London, 60 Crescent Road, London N22 4RZ.



Why we all dig Swampy

THE A30 "moles" aren't the only ones who want to know the true cost of Britain's still-secretive road-building schemes (Police dismisses inquiry demands, January 27). The Highways Agency has been playing hunt-the-slipper in east London over the cost of the M11 link road for more than a year. In Parliament, a local Labour MP was told the cost was £240m yet, a year later, the Highways Agency still persists with a huge public signpost near the scheme's start putting the price at just £200m. Don't the public have the right to know? H J Jones, 50 Dangan Road, London E11 2RF.

SWAMPY is correct — he would not have achieved any of the media coverage and the delays to the A30 that he and his co-tunnellers have done by writing to their MPs.

However, this high profile has given others the opportunity to lobby our MPs into action. The Road Traffic Reduction Bill is now making good progress through the Commons. (Dr) Sarah Hill, 5 Leopold Mews, London E9 7NL.

SO Swampy is getting state hand-outs? Great! I say double his payments. He is the best Minister for the Environment we have had for a generation. Dennis Chapman, 62 Cobbold Rd, London W12 9LW.

IS it too early to start canvassing for Swampy as BBC's "man of the year"? What chance of Swampy's tunnel becoming a listed building? I McIntosh, 1 Torphichen Place, Edinburgh.

Barred love

AS a woman involved with a death row inmate, I take exception to the insensitive heading of your article (Lovers in the kill or the thrill? December 21). I am thankful that Jan Feltner's relationship was given the credit it deserves. I too wrote to a man for a long period — over five years — before any feelings of intimate love, rather than friendship, were expressed between us. Meanwhile, his mother had become a dear friend; we supported each other as the struggle continued to prove her son's innocence.

Perhaps if, like me, these journalists had just spent two weeks in the ghetto of Kingston, Jamaica, with a death-row man's family; if they had played with his child, and held his mother as she cried in anguish for her son, perhaps they could write with more compassion and authority. Name and address supplied.

Please include a full address. We may edit letters; shorter ones are more likely to appear.

Britain's blind eye to racism

YOUR report that the Government is blocking plans for an EU centre to monitor racism and xenophobia (Major vetoes racism fight, January 27) fills me with dismay. Nearly a third of London's population are from black and ethnic minority communities, yet racial discrimination and intolerance persist and the number of reported racial incidents is rising.

As the European Year Against Racism is launched, there is evidence that racist organisations across Europe are strengthening their links. Last week, Danish terrorists attempted to wage a bombing campaign against mixed-race British students in London, which has the support of all 14 other EU states, would collect data on such groups and establish an EU-wide information network. (Cllr) Rania Patel, Association of London Government, 36 Old Queen Street, London SW1E 9JF.

IN 20 years, the Conservatives' only contribution to race equality has been to apply the Commission for Racial Equality's Code of Practice to employment, housing and education. They did not support CRR's recommendations to strengthen the Race Relations Act 1976. By comparison, Labour brought in the 1965, 1968 and 1976 race legislation. David Sparks, 27 Frimton Road, London SE6 3EZ.

WHEN John Major addressed businessmen from ethnic minorities last week, it was not an attempt to court the ethnic vote — it was an attempt to court the general intelligence. The veto is an attempt to capture the vote of the racist elements of the working and middle classes, who still believe that "they come over here, taking our jobs" and "they're morally and politically corrupt". Tony Collins, 76 Haberdasher Street, London N1 6EL.

Denial on trial

THE fact that Holocaust denial is not sufficient reason for criminalising it: the right to offend is inseparable from the right to freedom of expression (Why we must not law the race issue, January 30). The Highways Agency has been playing hunt-the-slipper in east London over the cost of the M11 link road for more than a year. In Parliament, a local Labour MP was told the cost was £240m yet, a year later, the Highways Agency still persists with a huge public signpost near the scheme's start putting the price at just £200m. Don't the public have the right to know? H J Jones, 50 Dangan Road, London E11 2RF.

A Country Diary

NORTH DERBYSHIRE: Hard to believe it's exactly 50 years since the arrival of the Big Snow in these parts. What people don't often realise (or remember) is how late the severe weather began. My father often used to remind us that the first snowstorm stated on January 25 in 1947. But from that day, the snow built up, whipped by biting winds to astonishing depths, and covered these hills until well into April. The light snows of last November and the recent New Year have been as nothing compared with the inundations of the Big Snow. Families like the Buntings at Grange Wood failed to get the horses and cart up their long track to the farm for more than eight weeks — shopping trips to the valley were truly expeditions that consumed most of a day traversing directly over hedge and wall tops. The sudden blizzard of February 21, 1947, added masses extra snow: there were several large avalanches in the hills soon after.

One such silver slide dumped heaps 30ft deep on the Snake Road, snow which stayed there several weeks before it was tackled with shovels. Farmers with spare time were set on by the county council to attempt cuttings through towering drifts on moor-top lanes. The major problem here was, of course, that a cart loaded with heavy blocks of snow-ice had to be reversed out of the cutting (difficult with a pair of Shires). This consumed masses of time and little progress was made by, say, a dozen men in six or seven hours of graft. The wind blew for much of February so men returning next morning often found yesterday's high-sided cutting filled in again. What a contrast to the still misty conditions this winter. We need deep frosts and a good covering of snow to help condition the ploughland. Oh yes, then we get a good thaw to receive the seed-drill spouts come bright March days. ROGER REDFERN

It's clean work but someone has to do it



Mark Lawson

IN a perfect final irony, a government which has been obsessed with privatisation has been forced to accept the reality of a public trust. The outside body and the panel of establishment grandees are nothing new in politics. But what is happening now is something different from the Wolfenden and Anns and Otts and Otts. This is not the delegation of power as delaying tactic or blame-avoidance — an old Westminster trick — but the delegation of power as survival tactic. Bereft of credibility themselves, politicians need to find someone else to do their dirty work. It must have been particularly painful for Douglas Hogg to be the minister required to concede that, on the question of food, the public now believed that the Government was simply reflecting the needs and grumbles of the farm lobby. The grandson and son of Lord Chancellors, he belongs to a political dynasty founded in days when the words of the government representative were gospel. This absolute belief in the power of ministerial opinion survived in his demeanour until the BSE scare.

Now, in farming, our judgments to a Food Supreme Independent but reporting to government, he has been forced to accept the prevailing view among voters: that if a politician's mouth is open, he must be lying. The creation of a lie-detector electorate — in part the result of politicians' proven mendacity and, in part, of a wider decline in social deference — has reduced the possibilities of government. Though the position of Prime Minister will still be bitterly contested for the trappings, future leaders will do less and less leading because of the contempt of the led. The business of government will be ever more a matter of independent advisors, referendums and review bodies. Eventually, a prime minister may be as personally powerless as an American president, who must devote economics to the Chairman of the Federal Reserve, war to Congress and, indeed, food safety to the genuinely independent and powerful Food and Drug Administration.

The problem with privatising honesty, however, is that it depends on public acceptance of the surviving honour of non-politicians. Curiously, despite the widespread evidence of the marvellousness of justice, judges still seem to command a reputation for objectivity and integrity. The public tended to take the side of, say, Taylor or Scott against those on whom they were reporting. Academics, too, seem able to claim respect. The Independent Review of Parades and Marches was chaired by Dr Peter North, vice-chancellor of Oxford University. Parliament chose Sir Gordon Downey, a rather obscure civil servant but a man with unusually wide experience as a corporate agony aunt, as Complaints Commissioner of the Stock Exchange and ombudsman of the Independent newspaper.

Yet, with politicians and royals already suffering a crisis of esteem, it seems reasonable to wonder how long these pockets of credibility within the Establishment may last. It is not hard to see that the new Food Supreme, when appointed, will be subject to smear and innuendo about his or her objectivity when ever a judgment irritates the farmers or the vegetarians or the doctors. Even if they have avoided professional connection with agri-business, however is chosen will, merely by the fact of being human, have some relationship with food — will be fat or thin, will

have eaten meals — and these past repasts will be scrutinised for any hint of bias. There is a current passion in American journalism for revealing the contents of the fridges and trash cans of celebrities. The first Food Safety Advisor would be well-advised to buy padlocks for the freezer and wheelie-bin.

BUT such doubts about the very possibility of objectivity — a relatively recent trend in western democracies — have long been an article of faith in Northern Ireland. It was presumably a civil servant with a dry sense of humour who suggested for the role of honest broker on the question of Ulster marches a man with the freighted surname North. And when Dr North, launching his Marches and Parades report on Thursday, commented that it was now "for the people of Northern Ireland" to act on his proposals, he cannot have done so with much optimism.

The peace talks — with their violent disagreements over even the constitution of committees to decide who might sit on committees — have already established that the Independent body is not a concept readily accepted by two communities primed to detect prejudice. Even if God The Father were to appear and issue his personal directive on the future of Northern Ireland, his intervention would not be conclusive. The losing side would loudly insist that the vision had been a unionist or nationalist trick with smoke and mirrors.

But if the electorate has difficulty with the theory of the impartial referee, so too has the Government. In refusing to accept Dr North's recommendation of an independent Parades Commission to take over control of the marches from the RUC, Sir Patrick Mayhew, a politician of the old rule-on school, has hauled at the ultimate logic of franchised-out power. Mr Hogg — in stopping short of any external scrutiny of the food business remotely equivalent to an American-style FDA — has made the same accommodation between instinct and reality.

Reconciliation, or justice and ashes?

Commentary

Martin Woollacott

WHEN the white officers were driving the 1,200 kilometres from Port Elizabeth to Pretoria, talking and smoking while a young African lay dying behind them in the vehicle, they were, it seems, acting "within the culture of the government of the day." That is what the lawyer representing those responsible for Steve Biko's death said this week when his clients appealed for amnesty from South Africa's Truth Commission.

"Can evil really be masked by such jargon, with its implication of an equivalence between a 'culture of liberation' and a 'culture of government'?" It is not only in South Africa that the worldwide phenomenon of legal adjudication on the past and its

crimes is bringing bad as well as good results. The problem is that when what has been hidden or denied is finally revealed it is often within the context of political compromises that replace old hypocrisies with new ones. Bishop Desmond Tutu may be right in saying that the political situation in South Africa is such that there was a choice between reconciliation and "justice and ashes", that is a fight to the finish rather than a negotiated revolution. But how can there not be something deeply unsatisfactory about a "reconciliation" that lets murderers walk the streets and gives their justifications such prominence?

Is the South African story that of a tragic collision between two movements of self-determination, or a story of racial oppression? There has probably never been a time when the past has been in such contention or when the operations of the law have been so central to the struggle over historical truth.

What links developments like the Nazi gold scandals in Switzerland, Sweden and Portugal, the Jewish property investigation and the trial of Maurice Papon in France, the

Truth Commission's work in South Africa, the international tribunals on former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, and such important court cases as the trial of those responsible for the Kwangju massacre in South Korea, is that what is at issue is not only blood guilt but versions of history. In the one case it may be the myth that the neutral states behaved properly during the second world war. In another it is the idea of a France whose collaboration with the enemy had been limited to a small section of the population, with whom accounts had been fully squared immediately after the war. In that of former Yugoslavia it is particularly the Serbian, but not only the Serbian, version of the wars and the events that led up to them that is potentially on trial as well as individual men. In South Korea, a history that justified military repression on the grounds that it was inspired by communists and played into the hands of a hostile North Korea was judged along with the two presidents and other defendants before the court.

There is a large difference between the rearward investigations of second world war

cover-ups and these more recent inquiries, some of them into conflicts which are not yet over. But the former represent a reckoning on previous investigations which were compromised or curtailed in ways which also threaten the newer courts and tribunals. In France, for instance, the investigations of collaborators failed off as the new authorities looked for allies against the communists, as the Cold War began, and as the need for national unity demanded a whitewashed version of second world war history. As a result it took a generation for the French to face the facts of how they had really behaved in the war, particularly toward the Jews.

The question of social memory is as critical as the crimes themselves. How could it be that pictures that once hung on the walls of prosperous French Jewish homes should be in the Louvre without any acknowledgment of even the existence of the families from which they were stolen? It is not only their lives that were taken but their biographies and their family trees — their very existence was removed from the historical record.

Everywhere, when victims survive they characteristically want above all a visibility for themselves and their lost ones that was previously denied. Again and again before the Truth Commission in South Africa, relatives of the those killed stressed that the death is one offence and the lies that were told about it, like those at the Biko inquest, is another. Such suppressions of the details of the fate of individuals are the groundwork upon which larger falsifications of history are erected.

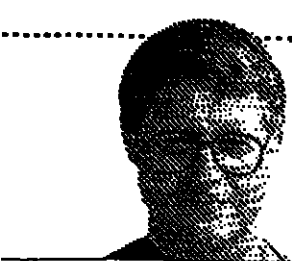
What Richard Goldstone, the first prosecutor of the Hague tribunal, called "the biggest criminal investigation in history" has 47 investigators, while in neighbouring Belgium, 350 police are committed to the inquiry into paedophile crimes. That is an interesting comparison because the Belgian undertaking is both a criminal investigation and an anguished inquiry into the state of the nation.

Now the United States is talking again of a special commando unit to arrest war criminals in Bosnia but even if this turns out to be more serious than in the past, it is clear that the powers which liberate judicial action, insofar as they can control it, with their general strategy in the Balkans.

This, and similar considerations in Central Africa, must undermine the tribunals, while the prospect of war crimes trials in such places as Cambodia recedes because of manoeuvres aimed at bringing Khmer Rouge leaders back into national politics. In Algeria, where the outrages of some elements among the insurgents grow ever more appalling, war crimes procedures have not even been suggested.

The defects of the legal assault on war crimes, whether at the national or the international level, are apparent. What had seemed like a new start in confronting war crimes and crimes against humanity has lost impetus. Too often the courts reach a kind of partial accommodation with the evil they were set up to fight, and with its twisted image of the past. Yet at least it is a fight of sorts.

Rebel without claws



Martin Kettle

VOTERS, being human beings, are generally embarrassed by arguments. They prefer, given the chance, to look on the bright side of life. So, when the pollsters ask them if they like their political parties united or divided, they always choose unity, a result which is about as surprising as if the same pollsters had invited them to say whether they prefer good rather than evil.

In the 1960s, after extensive practical research, Labour decided that a divided party loses elections. Now the Conservatives are about to be faced with the same conclusion. As a result, today's professional political wisdom prizes party unity above everything else. From this derives much of Tony Blair's otherwise unseemly obsession with party discipline. From it also comes his preoccupation, unattractively revealed at question time on Thursday, with casting himself as a strong leader, since this too is what the voters are deemed, since the days of Mrs Thatcher, to approve of.

But the voters, being human beings, are actually a bit more complicated than that. A contrary lot, they sometimes believe inconveniently contradictory things. So when the pollsters ask them whether they like MPs to stand up for what they believe in, even if the party says different, in many cases they will say that they like that too, even if as a consequence the party becomes disunited.

It's a hard circle to square. Yet, contrary or not, the voters' ill-fitting instincts are sensible. Parties that are not united are not much use to anyone and are punished by the voters, as Labour was in 1983 and the Conservatives will be in 1997. But nor is there much respect for an MP who believes in the party line and nothing but the party line and draws a comfortable salary for following it. Voters may not think much of politicians, but they like to have flesh and blood MPs, not anonymous lobby fodder.

Saying this does not make Sir George Gardiner, who has been rejected by the Conservatives of Reigate at the second attempt, into a hero. Remarkably few MPs who get deselected would deserve to qualify as martyrs, and Sir George is not among their number. He is not fit to be mentioned in the same breath as, for example, the Duchess of Atholl, who was deselected by the Conservatives in Kinross & West

Perthshire in 1938 for opposing the appeasement of Hitler, nor of Labour's Eddie Milne, who was deselected in 1974 for his opposition to local government corruption.

In general, history teaches that clever rebels survive, while dumb, or too clever-by-half rebels risk lose their seats. The three Conservatives to have fallen foul of their local constituency associations in the current parliament all illustrate the point. David Ashby brought and lost an ill-advised libel case; Nick Scott became too accident-prone; while Gardiner couldn't kick the habit of a lifetime of right-wing plotting.

Like John Browne and Sir Anthony Meyer in the last parliament, they have all paid the price for over-reaching themselves.

A free-spirited or independent-minded Tory MP can survive public embarrassment providing that he doesn't believe he is immortal. David Mellor, Tim Yeo and Jerry Hayes have all proved that it is possible to live to fight another day in spite of being the subjects of front page tabloid headlines. Steven Norris would have done so too. Hugh Dykes, John Gort and George Walden — like Alan Howarth before he crossed the House — have all continued to prosper in spite of their liking for political apostasy.

Even in the Labour Party, the 20th century's last bastion of democratic centralism, it is still possible for independent or opposition-minded MPs to survive. After the election, Labour squirms when John Major points out that dozens of Labour MPs disagree with the party leadership on Europe, because deep down they know it's true. Dennis Skinner may have been the lone recorded vote against this week's radical shake-up of the powers of party conference, but no one doubts that at least a couple of dozen Labour MPs are just as opposed as he is.

THANKS to a mighty effort of collective will, dissenting Labour MPs have mostly kept their disagreements quiet during the last two years. After the election they will be joined by an intake which it is fashionable to see as uncritically Blairite in character. I will believe that when I see it. Blairism does not have such deep roots as it claims, and Labour MPs remain the section of the party with the greatest potential to challenge the new order.

As it happens, Douglas Hurd chose this week to deliver a lecture in which he lamented the narrowing of the political class and the professionalisation of politics. Both of these phenomena are powerfully reflected in the new generation of prospective Labour MPs. Nevertheless, Hurd also pointed to the underestimated power of backbench MPs to hold a government minister to account, a power with which Labour MPs are currently unfamiliar but which is well catered for in Tom Sawyer's party reforms.

On the face of British politics, you would say that party control is now stronger than ever before, and that the days of the independent backbencher lamented by Hurd are gone. Look a bit closer at the dynamics of politics, though, and you wonder. After the election, backbenchers may find themselves in a new golden age of power, and perhaps even of public support.

There is such a thing as society. The 'me' generation is being overtaken by the 'we' generation as people see the limits of individualism. It is time, argues Geoff Mulgan, for politicians to take note

On the brink of a real society

WHEN most of your life, the tide of ideas has been flowing against the things you hold most dear, you learn to be wary of thinking that the tide has turned. It is too easy to be tempted by a false dawn, and as the great Italian thinker famously warned, pessimism of the intellect is a good corrective to optimism of the will.

But over the last couple of years even the most pessimistic intellect has noted a change of mood, almost a change in climate. It is hard to give it an exact definition. But Dick Morris, the superhubster of American politics, probably summed it up best when he wrote about the shift from "me" to "we".

Here the signs are scattered: like the Bill passing through Parliament that took for granted that driving cars was the problem, not the solution; or the public reaction against the clamour from businessmen and -women warning that inequality is now out of hand. For me, the most intriguing evidence has come from a poll, though not a conventional one. Every year the Henley Centre asks people a simple question: whether they believe that society does best when people look after their own interests, or when society acts collectively. The percentages supporting each option have not diverged much over the last 10 years, although before the last election the individualist option gained ground strongly, a good predictor of Conservative victory. The most recent figures tell a surprising story. The collectives are now in a large majority: 70 per cent to 30 per cent. Most remarkable of all, support for collective solutions is even higher amongst the young, the ABs and Londoners.

Metaphors are helpful for understanding what is happening. Often people talk of the political pendulum swinging from side to side, or of ideas marching in a grand forward march. But in fact the way the world changes has more in common with a drunkard walking along a dark alleyway: just about maintaining a forward movement, but bounding off the walls every few strides in zigzag movement. For much of the last 20 years the intellectual and political

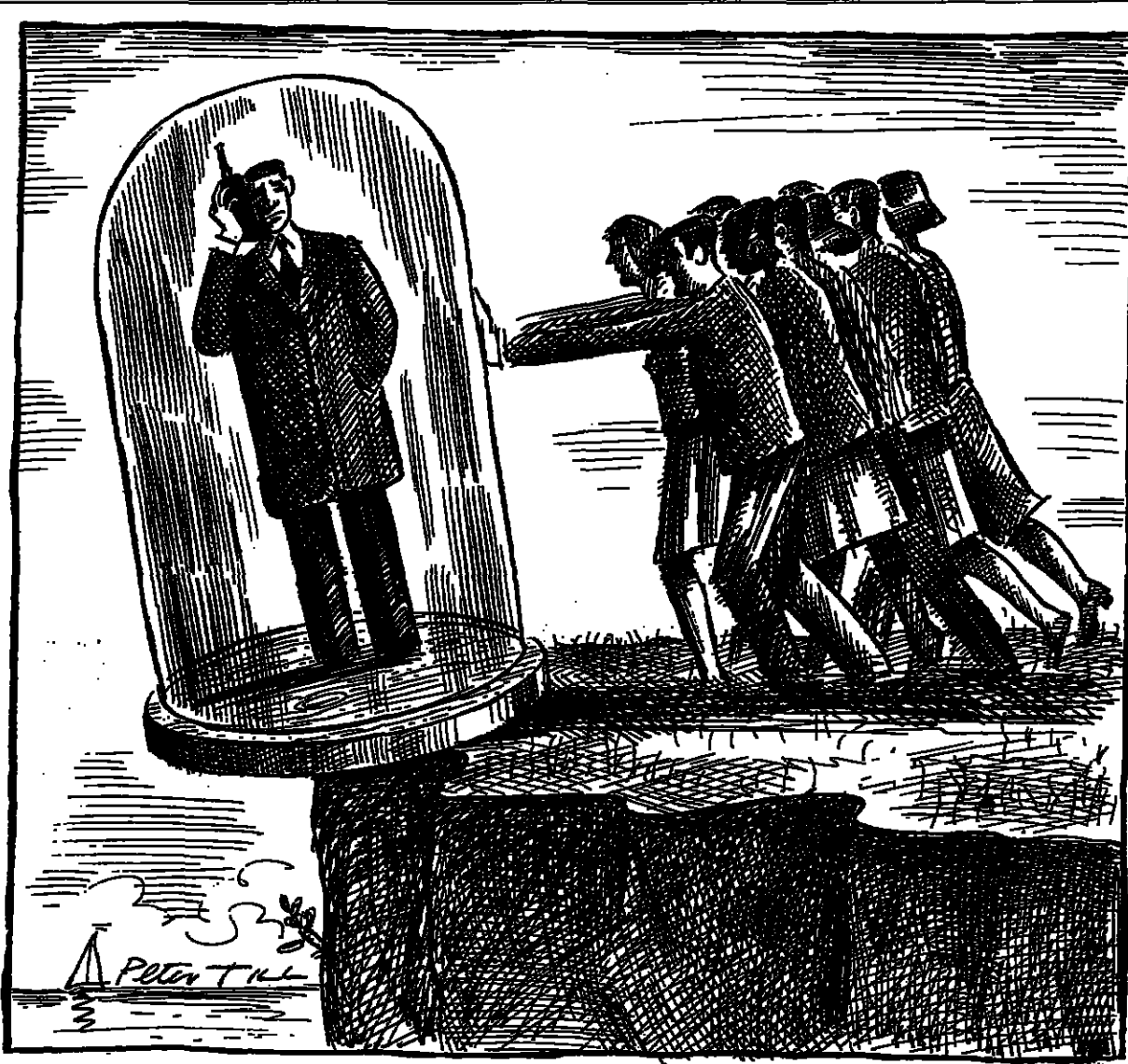
worlds have been dominated by the idea of the periodic lurches to the right. Because (to continue the metaphor) the walls were shrouded in darkness, it was easy to forecast that the drift towards a more market-oriented society would continue indefinitely.

Ideas of self-interest and competition made sense of a society in which children ate microwaved meals while watching TV in their bedroom, and adults preferred to sit in a traffic jam on their own than to use a train or bus.

But however much people have welcomed the chance to own their own home or car, and the prosperity to take foreign holidays, no one wants a freedom that leaves you lonely, insecure, fearful of walking out of your door and worried about the quality of the air you breathe. Nor is hyper-individualism very efficient. A society in which more people live on their own, drive on their own, and are entertained on their own, exists at a lower standard of living than one where people share these things, for the simple reason that there has to be so much duplication.

The wall that political ideas and movements bump into is disappointment. As the American political scientist Albert Hirschman pointed out a few years ago, disappointment has repeatedly driven the political cycle. After the public activism of the 1960s, a generation became disillusioned with the slowness of change, and turned instead to private life, to therapy and lifestyles. Today, by contrast, a generation that thought it could achieve the good life with a healthy pay packet and a nice bit of interior decoration is learning that if you ignore the public world it soon lets you down.

When disappointment sets in, a consistent pattern begins. In the first stage, people ask new questions in new ways. So, whereas 20 years ago the right's intellectuals began to ask whether government wasn't an enemy rather than a friend, now people are asking what can be done to improve public goods, or how to help societies stick together. And because these are real, compelling questions, they elicit the most creative thinking. Communitarianism, the arguments around civic society, trust, stakeholding, the green argument about everything from land to the biosphere, even the new insights from evolution-



ary psychology into why people cooperate: all are like streams feeding into the same river.

In the second stage, the disparate currents are given a coherent form, as the ethos of a movement of opinion, or a political party. This is what Thatcher did to the ideas of the new right, and what Cresswell did with revisionist socialism.

But so far, the most recent drift towards the politics of "we" has only been given partial expression by New Labour, just as, in the values of a younger generation, the subtle tension between the desire for autonomy and the desire to be connected, plugged in, part of a bigger whole, remains unresolved.

But it is the third stage that is hardest of all: translating the ethos into a way of governing, a new set of tools. All of the great movements of change have achieved this — whether Leninists or Fabians, Thatcherites or Gaullists. All managed to build a governmental architecture that fitted their goals, and carried their values all the way down to the teacher or the policeman. Indeed, it was precisely because they understood that their agenda could not be implemented through old structures that after 1979 the Tories set about privatising, contracting out and introducing competition with such relish. For Labour — like many of its counterparts around the world — this last step remains elusive. Its debates on how to govern are still stuck at the level of a few hints from Gerald Kaufman about how to cope with civil servants. It still seems more interested in being in office, rather than being in power.

quality of people's lives, rather than accepting that a percentage rise in GDP, or a few hundred pounds in people's pockets, will do the job. This may seem an obvious point. But governments have traditionally been very bad at focusing on real ends rather than on means. They are much better at improving exams rather than understanding, better at cutting waiting lists rather than making people healthier, better at distributing welfare payments than wellbeing. For similar reasons, too, we spend hundreds of times as much dealing with crime as preventing it, curing illness rather than averting it, coping with unemployment rather than preparing people to escape it.

YET ONCE you start concentrating on real, long-term goals, it often becomes possible to do things in very different ways — and more cheaply. As the environmentalists have shown, if your goal is warmth, it is usually better to redesign buildings so that they need less energy rather than to build new power plants. Much the same applies to the big systems that governments operate.

The second lesson flows from this. Because real people's lives are not separated into distinct functions like housing or community care, it has become increasingly hard to solve their most pressing problems through the old 19th-century model of separate departments, or fragmented agencies. It is not just that so many problems fall between the gaps. It is also that separate agencies and departments end up systematically dumping burdens on each other — as has happened with excluded children, or homeless 17-year-olds.

Moreover the best models empower people on the front line to shape government to people's needs rather than forcing them to fit into standardised boxes: for example, letting welfare counsellors customise packages of training, work and benefits, or letting GPs purchase everything from massages to gym subscriptions if that's the best way to make people healthy.

For much the same reasons, a government that is serious about solving problems has to decentralise. It is no good assuming that the same solution to unemployment will work in both Bournemouth and Bradford. Conditions vary, and it can be disastrously costly to test out new policies on the whole country at once — as the Tories learned with the national curriculum and the poll tax.

But the best virtue of letting towns and cities make their own solutions, and letting them bid for the funds to get things done, is that this is the best way to tap into the remarkable amount of innovation that is already taking place often in the most apparently depressed areas, where necessity has bred invention among social entrepreneurs, local councils and voluntary organisations which are quietly developing better ways of rebuilding communities and running schools or housing estates.

These are some of the structures that would make sense for a more community-oriented government. But it will also be essential to supplement the old traditions of command and control, and the more recent habit of doing everything through incentives with a greater use of commitments. This may mean asking parents

to commit to helping with homework, it may mean encouraging households to separate waste for recycling; it may mean following the Dutch model of agreeing a covenant of environmental targets between business and government, whereby business is left to determine how each target is met.

Add these together and it is possible to see a radically new way of governing, one that puts the emphasis on prevention not cure, looking at problems in the round rather than slicing them up, and seeing society as a web of commitments rather than contracts. Such would be a programme that drew on the seismic shift from "me" to "we", and turned it into new architectures and tools of government. Fortunately it is not utopian. Most of these tools are already in use. The problem, however, is that most people aren't much interested in how government works — even many who aspire to run it.

It is more fun to stick to rhetoric and, if you don't have much experience of running things, it is bound to seem safer to leave the machine as it is. But unless a political movement can make the step from ideas and ethos to tools and machines, it will ultimately fail, and the wicked, intractable social problems of our time will remain unsolved.

Passing The Torch, a conference on the future of the Centre-left, sponsored by the Guardian and Nexus in conjunction with the Fabian Society, is on March 1 at the LSE, London WC2, speakers include Tony Blair, Robin Cook and Roy Jenkins. For booking details see the advertisement today on page 12. Further information: 0171 222 8877



This week's essayist, Geoff Mulgan, is director of the thinktank Demos. He has previously worked as an adviser to Gordon Brown and in telecommunications. He is a visiting professor at University College, London. His next book, *Connectivity*, is published by Chatto and Windus in March. A collection of Demos work, *Titled Life After Politics*, is launched at a conference today at the Institute of Education in London, with speakers including Roger Scruton, Robin Murray, Helen Wilkinson and John Gray.

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Earnest crusader for the wronged investor

Seriously flawed? Misunderstood? DAN ATKINSON on life with George Staples at the Serious Fraud Office

THE dictionary definition of a solicitor is, among other things, "one who asks earnestly". It could have been tailor-made for George Staples, the one-time commercial litigator who has steered the Serious Fraud Office during five years so turbulent that, at one point, an exasperated Government looked certain to scuttle the ship. Throughout his directorship, Mr Staples has continued to ask earnestly for a fair hearing. That he must be the last man in England to speak in proper sentences may, in part, explain why his pleadings were ultimately successful.

Now he is about to slip back through the Iron Curtain that separates public prosecutor from private practitioner, and the high-profile official from the anonymous corporate lawyer. He sums up his term as "five extremely interesting years", and the agency's work simply as handling cases of "very serious dishonesty". Whatever does or does not happen at the election, "I'd be surprised if... things were to change very much."

This confidence illustrates how far the SFO has come from the dark days of 1993/4, when assorted case collapses and an ebbing of public good will put its extinction firmly on the political agenda. But then, it had fallen so far from the glory days of 1988-92 that the only way was up — or out. George Staples's tenure has seen events turn at least

three-quarters, if not full circle. He started work just weeks before the June 1992 dawn raids that netted Kevin and Ian Maxwell. The arrests marked the low point of public sympathy for Captain Bob's sons; they also, with hindsight, represented the high point of public regard for the SFO.

Thenceforward, whatever could go wrong did go wrong. Multiple Guinness hearings

aborted, the entire Blue Arrow share-support case evaporated, without a single conviction, and, in spring 1993, Asil Nadir fled to Turkish Cyprus. Ironically, this event — one

which could not be laid at Mr Staples's door, as his men had opposed Nadir's bail — triggered the Government's commissioning of the Davies Report into the future of the SFO. Newspapers that had once salivated over this awesome, Elliot Ness-style strike force now joked about the "Seriously Flawed Office".

Worse, the British public — once so gung-ho for whacking the swindlers — seemed to have transferred their sympathy to SFO targets. Like the Englishman who greeted a goring in a Spanish ring by declaring, "I say! Well done the bull!", those whom the SFO had been set up to protect — ordinary workers and savers — appeared to greet each acquittal with a metaphorical "good on ya". But whereas the Englishman was escorted from the bullring,



Into the firing line... The Maxwell brothers and Asil Nadir thrust Staples into the limelight. PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

this time it was the Staples Squad that looked likely to be ushered offstage.

Davies reported in March 1995, and the SFO slowly revived. Contrary to some expectations, Davies supported the office's continuing work. Looking back, the director says Davies told the world: "The SFO is here to stay."

More than that, by dropping the minimum size of fraud qualifying for SFO involvement from £5 million to £1 million, the Davies Report

put the office back on the side of ordinary investors. In the months and years ahead, SFO teams were more likely to be seen popping up in a provincial Crown Court, nailing a bent solicitor, than conducting high-profile dawn raids on peak-time television against glamorous defendants.

Through it all, the director's earnest tones helped turn opinion. Reluctant to criticise the SFO's ancient regime, he accepts that the

freebooting image may have generated hostile opinion: "We've had to work hard to show that we're not overbearing." And now, as his last months in office pass, even the SFO's so-called disasters look less catastrophic.

The collapse of the second Maxwell case occurred after the judiciary not so much moved the goalposts as brought them to within an inch of one another; the Roger Levitt plea bargain was a shrewd move to establish

criminality against a difficult target. Asil Nadir may still be a-fleeing but his lieutenant, Elizabeth Forsyth, was convicted. Guinness I — the Saunders conviction — still stands, and the European Court of Human Rights exempted SFO special powers from censure.

There have been straight-forward successes, most prominently a string of convictions related to the Bank of Credit and Commerce International crash. But deter-

The triumphs

- September 1993: Syed Akber, "chief engineer" of Bank of Credit and Commerce International scandal, jailed for six years for misuse of \$1.2 billion funds.
- March 1995: Davies report calls for retention of SFO as premier anti-fraud agency and suggests dropping threshold for cases from £5 million to £1 million.
- July 1995: Investigation into Arrow's finance house fraud results in jailing of former executive chairman Muhammed Naviede for nine years.
- November 1995: For second time Court of Appeal throws out Ernest Saunders's appeal against conviction in the Guinness affair. The SFO stakes its reputation for fairness and thoroughness on making charges stick.
- April 1996: Asil Nadir's former aide Elizabeth Forsyth jailed for five years on Polly Peck-related charges.
- December 1996: MTM chemical company fraud inquiry results in convictions of Richard Lines and Thomas Baxter.
- December 1996: European Court of Human Rights exempts SFO powers from general criticism of "tailor-made" arrangements in UK fraud inquiries.

The disasters

- February 1993: US lawyer Thomas Ward acquitted on Guinness-related charges.
- May 1993: Asil Nadir skips bail and flees to Turkish Cyprus, putting himself out of the range of British extradition law. The former Polly Peck chief claims he would not have received a fair trial.
- November 1993: Roger Levitt given 180 hours' community service for fraudulent trading after plea-bargaining.
- December 1993: Attorney-General Sir Nicholas Lyell admits Asil Nadir-related documents were wrongly handed by SFO personnel to Crown prosecutors.
- October 1994: Former Brent Walker chairman George Walker cleared on all fraud charges.
- January 1995: Kevin and Ian Maxwell and Larry Trachtenberg acquitted at Old Bailey on all charges. SFO risks "bad loser" tag by announcing plans to try Kevin Maxwell on fresh charges.
- September 1996: Mr Justice Buckley rules there will be no second trial of Kevin Maxwell. George Staples says ruling "emasculates" fraud hearings and calls for rethink of jury system.

rence is as important as prosecution. Has the SFO deterred anybody? "[You] can never measure deterrence... my own feeling is that that [the SFO's existence] would cause anybody to be extremely careful."

He added that "before the present regime was set up there were cases... but... [they] didn't go to the... stage of a criminal prosecution."

It is the prosecution and trial stage that will be his successor's big headache. Mr Staples may be handing over an SFO in better shape, but contradictory judicial rulings have left the fraud-trial system in disarray.

First, the marathon Blue Arrow case led judges to order big trials to be "severed" into smaller ones. The SFO obliged, only to be told last year in the Maxwell case that the second trial could not go ahead. Even the ever-patient SFO director could not contain his frustration. On September 25, he said jury trial of fraud cases had been "emasculated" and that "a solution to this problem is now urgently required."

A lifelong supporter of the jury system, he reluctantly called for a re-think as far as fraud cases were concerned; options include a judge with two "expert assessors" and special juries (composed of qualified people), abolished in 1970.

But as a solicitor, would he advise any client to put his liberty in the hands of such tribunals, or would he counsel that the Crown Court, with 12 good people and true, remains the fairest forum?

"[It's] difficult to speculate about what one might do," he said, adding that, at present,

"the jury trial is the system we have".

As for more basic advice to the next director, George Staples warned that the three main duties — managing cases, the office and liaising with the SFO's political masters — have been joined by a fourth, public relations. He said: "The presentational role has assumed quite a high importance."

George Staples's appointment was one of the final acts of the 1987-93 Government before it dissolved itself and headed for the hustings, and it could be that he spends a few weeks under the next administration: he leaves Elm Street at the end of April.

His personal legacy? "I think we have succeeded in explaining the work of the office more clearly to people." As for that work — the pursuit of serious fraud — George Staples is in no doubt it is a moral issue. "[Ordinary] people who have worked through their lives to gather together in some cases quite modest savings... suffer a very great deal."

And so back, as it were, to soliciting. A more straightforward line of work, where a client is a client? "I don't think you have the sort of judgments that you have to make as a public official." But he regards his SFO time as "five extremely interesting years", adding: "You can't be in the limelight the entire time."

As he departs, a new generation of big cases — Wickes, Morgan Grenfell, Sunnington — is proving, again, that what goes around at Elm Street eventually comes around.

But these cases — their investigation and possible prosecution — will be somebody else's responsibility.

Boxster gliding to Finnish finish

Porsche pulls clear of debts

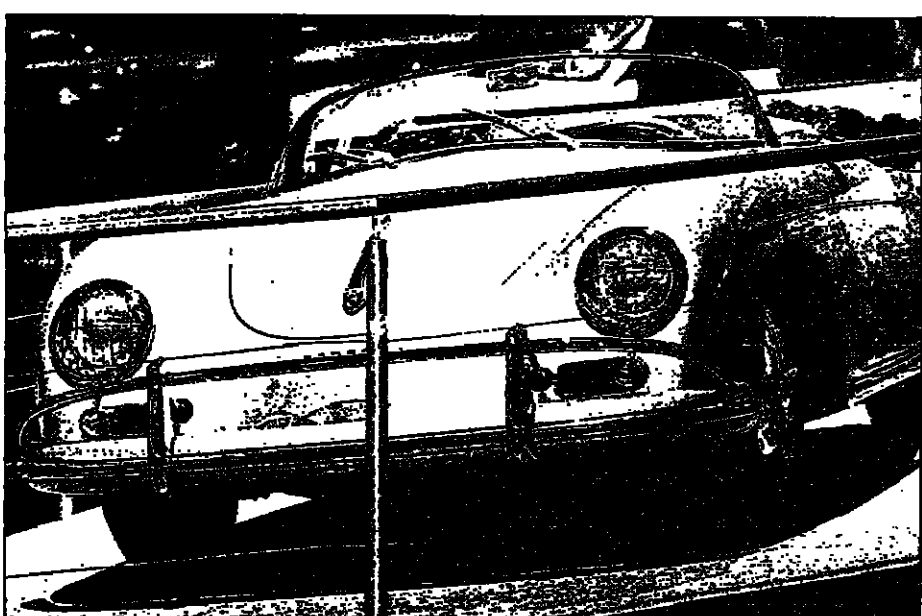
David Gow

PORSCHE'S prolonged sickness was pronounced over yesterday when it disclosed a tripling of profits from DM10.3 million (£3.9 million) to DM36 million — in the first six months of 1996. Four years ago Porsche, a by-word for conspicuous consumption in the 1990s, was bleeding red ink. It has taken drastic measures, in the boardroom and on the shop-floor, to staunch the haemorrhaging.

The Stuttgart-based car-maker's results were scarcely a bonanza. But then, in 1992/3 Porsche lost DM239 million as the recession ate into the very core of the business.

That *annus horribilis* the firm's Zuffenhausen plant turned out just 12,500 911s and 958s. New demand for the new two-seater roadster, the Boxster convertible, is so strong Porsche has had to outsource production abroad.

For the first time in Porsche's history its cars will be built on foreign



Going abroad... the Porsche Boxster

PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID BILLOTTE

fields — specifically 5,000 a year in Finland, by the automotive division of Valmet Oy, mainly a paper and board producer. It may not be as momentous as Mercedes' recent abandonment of the Made in Germany marque for Made by Mercedes — but it's deeply symbolic of the radical upheaval in German industry. The Boxster is the first fruit of that upheaval in working conditions and labour costs: produced for a fraction of the cost of a 911 and substantially cheaper to buy. Porsche chairman Wendelin Wiedeking and his co-directors slashed the

workforce and introduced flexible working. The Zuffenhausen employees, moreover, joined in enthusiastically.

Demand for the car, seen as Porsche's ultimate saviour, has been so high that there is said to be a six- or nine-month waiting list. It helped raise output to 12,800 911s and Boxsters in the first half — a 25 per cent increase — of which the new two-seater accounted for 3,150 cars. Overall turnover was up 20 per cent to DM1.7 billion.

German analysts expect more Porsches to be produced abroad even with the

increased competitiveness of the Zuffenhausen plant, not least because countries like Finland are still more profitable than Germany. But the company said it remained committed to Stuttgart region. "Porsche will continue to keep capacity utilisation high in Zuffenhausen and thereby secure employment," the board said.

With BMW's sales rising by 13 per cent in 1996, and Mercedes' by 7 per cent, some analysts even promise a "golden period" for German carmakers, helped by the mark's decline against the dollar.

Battle for the skies that makes even monetary union look easy

Euro Eye

MARK MILNER

TRAINS and boats and by what is happening over the Channel with such frequency and speed these days that it is sometimes hard to remember the legacy of Britain's physical division from continental Europe.

History, however, is not so easily shrugged off as geography, not least in key corporate and economic sectors. Take two examples, each vital to Britain's economic prospects — the planned European central bank and the future of Europe's aerospace and defence industry.

The two may appear to have little in common. The job of the ECB will be to look after the new currency, setting interest rate policy to ensure that inflation in the euro area is kept in check and the currency's value maintained. By contrast, the future of the European defence industry is being shaped, not by which countries will sign up

for the first wave of monetary union, but by what is happening to the industry's rapidly restructuring counterpart (and rival) in the US.

But the companies which make up the European aerospace industry already have to live with the decisions of the central banks from whose ranks the ECB's membership will be drawn.

Given the relative weakness of the pound and strength of the French franc against the dollar for most of the time since sterling left the exchange rate mechanism in 1992, it is likely that Eddie George, governor of the Bank of England, is more popular with his domestic aerospace industry than his opposite number at the Bank of France, Jean Claude Trichet.

There are other contrasts. France has given its central bank independence in setting interest rates — an important step in the process of European central bank integration. That has not been enough to prevent Anglo-Saxon dominated financial markets from occasionally doubting the strength of the French commitment to such independence.

Such speculation raises the despairing eyebrows of French monetary officials who ask how anyone can think that after almost a decade-and-a-half of sticking to the *franc fort* the country will suddenly abandon the idea so close to the date for monetary union.

In Britain, Chancellor Kenneth Clarke determines inter-

est rates. Independence for the Bank of England is unlikely to be a legislative priority whatever the outcome of the forthcoming election.

But in terms of the aerospace industry, Britain is well ahead of France as a moderniser. Most of Britain's once fragmented aerospace industry has been united for years under the British Aerospace banner and there are those, certainly in the UK, who would like to see a European Aerospace along similar lines built around the Airbus consortium.

Yet putting together even pieces of France's aerospace

commission now pondering the relative value of the two delayed another important piece of restructuring when it wrecked the plan to sell the Thomson defence business to Lagardère, owner of the MIRA missile business — which it did only because it disliked a companion deal to sell Thomson's consumer electronics business to Daewoo of South Korea.

Allowing Lagardère to take on Thomson would have been an important step in European integration, given MIRA's joint venture with BAe. Another deal will have to be put together.

One result of the slow pace of integration within the European defence industry is that it is now building competing fighter aircraft; the Eurofighter, France's Rafale (to say nothing of Sweden's Gripen). All will be trying to sell in what is likely to be a shrinking market. It will be another generation on before the chance for co-operation emerges.

The central banking picture is, potentially, equally gloomy. Rows are brewing over the likely insistence of the ECB on the use of minimum reserve requirements and possible restrictions on the access of "our" banks to the post-monetary union, cross border banking settlement system known as Target as well as the question of political control.

And this confirms that division, already expensive, will become even more so

One result of the slow pace of integration within the European defence industry is that it is now building competing fighter aircraft

companies is proving sticky. The marriage of Aerospatiale and Dassault Aviation at last looks close, but has taken a deal of time, given the government has voting control of both.

Ironically, the privatisation

Abbey

Clarke hints

Canada to cut 40 jobs and lose 100 sh

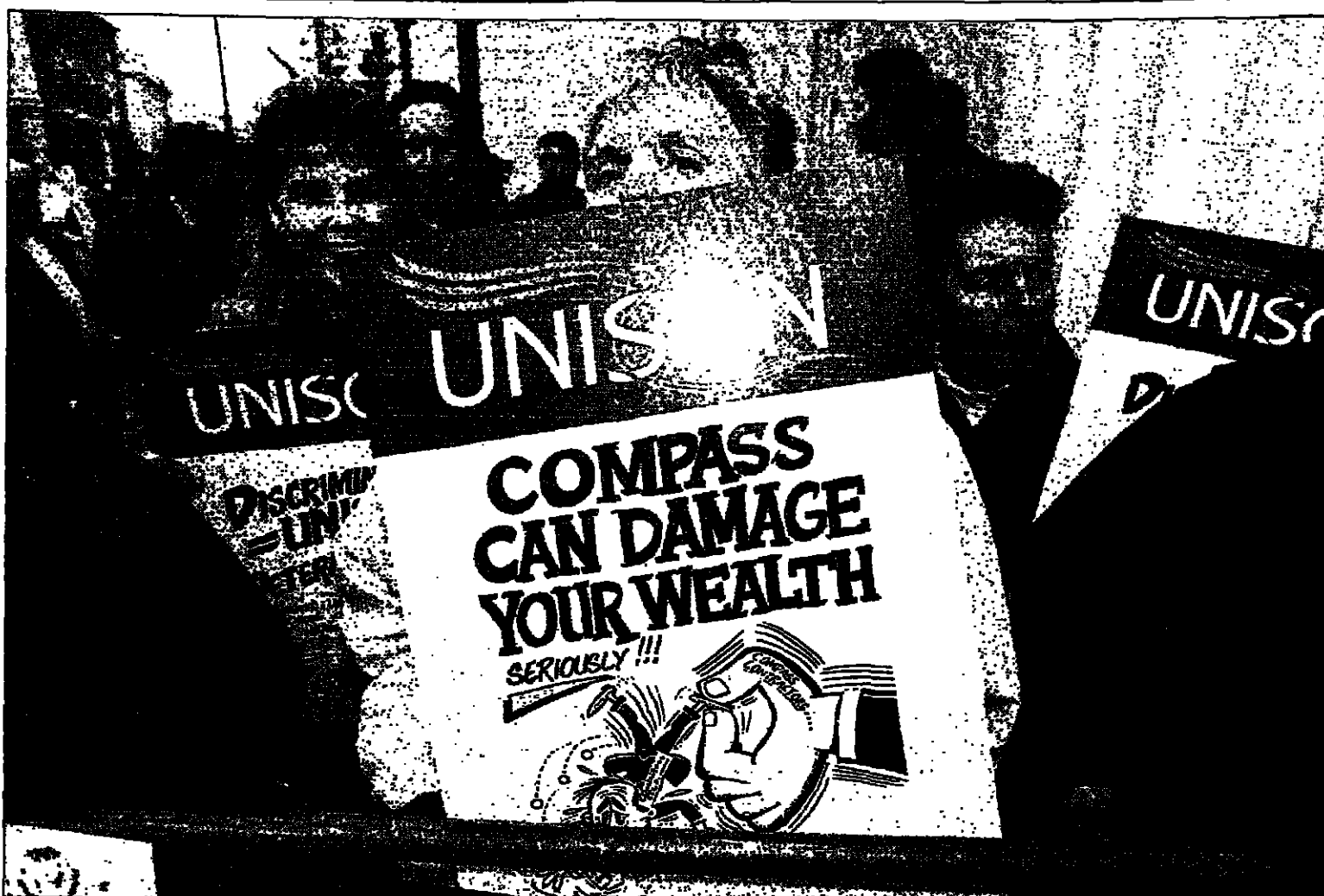
Fresh course in catering protest

PROTESTERS from Compass, the world's largest contract catering group, lobbied the multi-national's annual meeting in London's Pall Mall yesterday, writes *Seumas Milne*.

But representatives of 500 catering and domestic portering staff employed at Down Lisburn and Sperrin Lake Land NHS trusts in Northern Ireland, who were sacked last year and re-employed on worse pay and conditions, said they were optimistic after talks reopened last night.

The dispute over the Compass contracts triggered a two-week strike last November. The company is suing the trade union, Unison, over that action and a second one, called off last week. Unison argues that the workers' new contracts contravene both equal pay legislation and the government's Fair Treatment guidelines against religious discrimination.

PHOTOGRAPH: KIPPA MATTHEWS



£400m cash windfall on offer for policyholders but ScotAm directors dismiss hostile £1.4 billion bid

Abbey drums up an auction

Richard Miles and Teresa Hunter

ABBEY National's surprise bid yesterday for Scottish Amicable, the mutual insurer planning a stock market float, is set to spark a fierce auction.

The Abbey's offer, valuing the Stirling-based company at between £1.1 billion and £1.4 billion includes a £400 million instant cash windfall for with-profit policyholders.

But other companies may now throw their hats into the ring, including Prudential, NatWest Bank and ING, the Dutch bank which came to the rescue of Barings.

ScotAm directors last night dismissed Abbey National's bid as poor value for investors. Details of their own offer and the company's float, scheduled to take place in three to five years, will be sent to policyholders in the next fortnight.

But, under the Abbey's offer, policyholders will receive an immediate bonus in cash or shares, with the

rest bulk of the £400 million going to the 1.1 million with-profit policyholders. Individual pay-outs would be linked to the term and size of the policy, but the average sum is about £370.

Abbey National, whose shares yesterday rose by 13.5p to 782.5p, also intends to inject between £700 million and £1 billion of its own cash into ScotAm's life fund — much needed to finance further expansion of the company — in return for 10 per cent of any future profits from the fund.

ScotAm's own plans are far more complicated. Policyholders will receive an initial bonus worth an average £88, plus a further bonus worth £180 when the company floats. The bonus will be added to the investor's policy.

Charles Toner, deputy chief executive of Abbey National, said: "We have put a very strong offer to the directors of ScotAm, which is palpably more than is on the table at the moment. What we would really like now is for them to go away and put the offer to their policyholders."

The Abbey sees its hostile



move against ScotAm as a result of its race to capture National & Provincial, where its bid blew wide open the debate about how much the society was worth and whether customers were getting value.

This triggered a wave of bids against N&P, although Abbey National's £1.3 billion offer was the one finally chosen for recommendation by the board. The Abbey believes its bid for ScotAm could spark a similar auction.

ScotAm said yesterday it had received a number of telephone calls from interested parties since Abbey National's offer became public, but no formal bids. The company said it had no plans to raise its own offer to policyholders.

ING, the Pru and NatWest, which was beaten to Clerical Medical by the Halifax last March, are all known to be interested in taking over a life insurer.

If the Abbey's bid is successful, it will keep ScotAm as a separate brand from Scottish Mutual, the Glasgow-based life insurer which it bought in 1992. Abbey National has also pledged to retain the 1,300 staff at ScotAm's Stirling headquarters, though support operations would be merged.

Both insurers market policies through independent financial advisers, but there would be little overlap. ScotAm's core markets are mortgage-linked endowments, while Scottish Mutual is strong in personal pensions. If merged, they would become Scotland's third largest insurer with £22 billion under management.

Insurers under pressure to abandon their mutual status

ABBEY National's audacious bid for Scottish Amicable could herald a radical shake-up for Scottish life offices, writes *Pauline Springett*.

Several analysts believe that Scottish Life and Scottish Widows may try to abandon their mutual status. "Neither needs to do so financially, but they might find themselves under growing pressure to do so," one analyst said.

Both mutuals have never-theless declared their determination to keep their status, as has Scottish Widows.

There are also fears that demutualised companies may become takeover targets for English or continental insurers. That could result in a movement of funds under management

away from Scotland. The eight large Scottish life offices, led by the mutuals Standard Life and Scottish Widows, have £110 billion under management and employ 30,000 people.

David Nisbet, an analyst at NatWest Markets, said Scotland's life sector was sufficiently robust to weather the changes. "I doubt whether anyone expects Scottish Amicable to be the last to demutualise, but the Scottish companies are firmly rooted in Scotland," he said.

Scotland's banks, insurers and fund managers employ 272,000 people — one in seven jobs. The shake-up in the insurance sector has already brought warnings from the Manufacturing, Science and Finance union that jobs could be at risk.

In recent years Abbey National has taken over Scottish Mutual, Life Association of Britannia has been bought by Britannia Life, Scottish Equitable by the Dutch group Agon and Provident Mutual by General Accident.

Clarke hints that interest rates will not go up

Larry Elliott in Davos

CHANCELLOR Kenneth Clarke last night set a "collaborative" course for the Governor of the Bank of England, Eddie George, when he dropped the broadest of hints that base rates will be left on hold at Wednesday's meeting.

Mr Clarke, who is in Davos attending the world economic forum, said his decision to peg borrowing costs at 6 per cent just before Christmas had been right, and had been

vindicated by subsequent events. While the Chancellor stressed that he would make policy month by month, his remarks implied that — despite Mr George's concern — there will be no increase in rates before the election unless there is a sudden acceleration in the economy.

The minutes of the Chancellor's December meeting with the Governor, released this week, showed Mr George pressing for an immediate quarter-point rise, and adding that delay would mean the Bank demanding a half-point

rise in the New Year. But Mr Clarke said yesterday that he had been swayed by signs that consumer demand growth was slackening, by the strength of sterling and by the fact that "nothing very remarkable" was happening in manufacturing.

"Subsequent figures showing what was going on at that time [December] have reinforced my judgement. It turned out to be right," the Chancellor said.

Mr Clarke admitted that he had been at odds with Mr George, but added: "It was not

a huge difference of opinion. The Governor was not pushing too hard."

Stressing that he was committed to hitting the Government's 2.5 per cent inflation target, the Chancellor said that despite the strength of the money supply figures and the pick-up in the housing market, Britain was enjoying a run of "spectacularly good figures on underlying cost pressures".

Underlying inflation has not been below 2.5 per cent for two years. But Mr Clarke argued that he was tougher on

inflation than the shadow chancellor, Gordon Brown, who laid out his approach to achieving price stability in a speech yesterday.

"I have actually delivered low inflation during a recovery," Mr Clarke said. "Gordon Brown won't even say what his inflation target will be, even though he wants to be Chancellor in three months time."

The Chancellor played down the risks of Japanese investors shunning Britain if sterling remains outside a single currency, saying that

the Government's wait-and-see policy was considered sensible by Japanese industrialists.

Howard Davies, the deputy governor of the Bank of England, said that banks should examine whether their portfolios would stand up to the strain of a financial crisis in Japan or if monetary union did not go ahead.

"These events are not probable, but they are within the realms of possibility, and should therefore be encompassed in stress testing of portfolios."

Granada to cut 340 jobs and close 100 shops

Roger Cowe

GRANADA is to close 100 of its 562 rental shops with the loss of 250 jobs. A further 90 jobs will go from the work force of 1,000 people at the chain's headquarters in Bedford.

The news came in an internal announcement to staff just two months after Granada said rationalisation was complete.

In November, the TV and leisure group said the rental business had been reduced to a profitable scale. "Rationalisation is nearing completion with a reduction in the estate to 562, all of which are now profitable in their own right."

A company spokeswoman said last night that the shops were barely breaking even, although the rest of the chain was trading satisfactorily. A final decision has not yet been taken.

Closures will not begin until May, after consultation with staff and a further detailed review of the shops' prospects.

The group said the decision was unconnected with troubles in the industry. "Fewer people are going into the shops to pay their bills, because they are paying through banks or with direct debits," the spokeswoman said.

"And, although rentals of TVs are falling, people are renting other things such as mobile phones, personal computers or white goods."

The company has reacted to the change in customer habits by investing in service and call centres.

Granada reported a small increase in rental profits for its last financial year, ended in September. The rental chain contributed £126 million of the group's £677 million operating profit. The group said it had benefited from upgrading TV models, and winning business in satellite receivers and other new products.

Two weeks ago, Granada's rival, Thorn, which operates Radio Rentals in the UK, warned that profits would be below expectations and it would be slashing costs and might close some shops.

Southern offers £156m

Simon Beavis, Industrial Editor

SOUTHERN Electric yesterday became the latest private firm to offer a generous buyout to shareholders, announcing a £156 million offer to investors as part of a capital reorganisation.

Many privatised companies have rushed out to buy back shares in order to shore up their defences against takeover and increase borrowings ahead of the general election — after which Labour is promising to hit them with a

windfall tax on excess profits.

To every holder of 100 shares Southern is offering 184 new ordinary shares and 200 new "B" shares, which will be bought back by the company at 50p each, without commission or dealing costs.

The complex manoeuvre, almost identical to one employed by Yorkshire Water on Thursday, means each block of 200 shares will yield a £80 windfall for investors.

The group is one of only two RECs that have escaped takeover in the frantic bidding frenzy of the last two years. Industry observers believe that any remaining bids

for utilities would have to be made in the next two weeks to avoid becoming embroiled in the election campaign.

Ian Marchant, finance director of Southern, admitted that the move was aimed to bolster the group's defences.

Analysts believe the move — equivalent to a buyback of about 8 per cent of the company's shares — would raise earnings per share by up to 5 per cent. Gearing will rise to 15.8 per cent. Shares yesterday moved up 13p to 80p.

The company has pledged to pay a final dividend for the year of 15.05p on top of the interim dividend of 12.5p.

News in brief

No Saunders appeal yet

Ernest Saunders, the former Guinness chairman who appealed to the European Court of Human Rights against his conviction in the UK courts, will not get an automatic referral of his case to the Appeal Court.

In a written parliamentary answer, Home Office minister Lady Blatch said the government had considered the European Court's judgement that Mr Saunders' rights had been infringed. She said it did not constitute grounds for a referral, but Mr Saunders could take the matter further.

Record arms exports

Britain exported weapons worth a record £5.1 billion last year, defence procurement minister James Arbutnot announced yesterday. It took 25 per cent of the world market and is in second place behind the US in the arms traders' league table.

Mr Arbutnot said arms factories provide direct or indirect employment for 360,000 people. The Campaign Against the Arms Trade said that selling arms "is not something of which the country should be proud".

The real thing

Sales of nearly 14 billion cases of soft drinks helped Coca-Cola to push 1996 profits up to a record \$3.49 billion (£2.15 billion), it announced yesterday.

Davos Notebook

New Labour lets the chance slip



Larry Elliott

MOST of the global movers and shakers that matter are up here in the high Swiss Alps. Tycoons, politicians, intellectuals, and economic gurus trip over their own egos trying to get their message across. Blink and you might miss Benjamin Netanyahu. But never mind, here comes George Soros.

For the Brits, Malcolm Rifkind, Kenneth Clarke and Howard Davies formed a heavyweight triumvirate, but the organisers were surprised and a bit miffed that, despite their best efforts, Tony Blair did not turn up.

In a way, it's strange that New Labour turned down the opportunity. After all, Davos is the year's biggest networking opportunity and the Opposition has been networking like mad at home. Having wooed the UK corporate sector with his pro-business approach, Mr Blair could have broken bread with the avatars of global capitalism.

Had he done so, he would have detected that things are not quite going to plan. The year since the last Davos meeting has seen widespread industrial unrest in Europe, Argentina and, most spectacularly, South Korea. It has seen unemployment continue to rise in continental Europe. And it has seen the inexorable growth of crime, the industry that has benefitted most from the three big developments of the past decade — the collapse of the Soviet Union, the revolution in technology and communications, and the globalisation of capital.

Like the economy, the structure of organised crime has changed. It is no longer organised by small mafia families, but tends to be run like a corporation, with a financier at the top and a network of lawyers and accountants. The most interesting aspect yesterday came from Larry Summers, the deputy secretary to the US Treasury, who made three points that effectively demolished the "End of History" supporters.

His first point was that the world is not at the end of macroeconomics. Citing Keynes, he talked about the problems of inadequate demand and the risks to the financial system posed by deficiencies in the real economy.

If mentioning Keynes was too heresy for Summers, he went on to add that globalisation did not mean that the world was at the end of a need for a strong state. As many problems came from having governments that were too weak as from having governments that were too strong. "This might mean enforcing property rights in transition economies, providing education and health in developing countries, and fostering universal inclusion in the West."

Finally, Summers said that the world was not at the end of politics. Governments had to ensure that global integration did not mean local disintegration, with all the fruits of growth benefitting a rich elite.

It was splendid stuff, just the sort of speech a progressive politician of the left is supposed to come up with. It was a pity Mr Blair was not there to hear it. Or, better still, to make it.

model of downsizing and deregulation was a fast-growing export, he said: "I am here to warn you. With all due respect, it is a highly costly, very toxic export, dangerous to the health and well-being of working people and national economies across the world."

Later, he made a telling comparison between the 25 years of Keynesianism after the second world war and the subsequent quarter of a century of monetarist economics and conservative politics.

In the fifties and sixties, Mr Sweeney said, the social compact between government, employers and unions ensured that "rich and poor alike benefited from economic growth... we all grew together."

Nowadays in the US, worker productivity was up, stock prices were soaring, executive salaries were skyrocketing. "But most people are working longer and harder just to make ends meet. We are growing apart."

ASSUMING, of course, that they are working at all. The German sociologist, Ulrich Beck, writing in the latest edition of the US magazine *Dissent*, argues that capitalism is killing work. Beck's view is that, as global capitalism divests itself of responsibility for employment and for democracy, it is digging its own grave.

"Let there be no illusions: a capitalism focused only on ownership and profits, which turns its back on the employed, on the social-welfare state, and on democracy, will undermine itself. While the profit margins of the multinational corporations are growing, these same companies are stripping the high-priced countries of both jobs and tax revenue," he wrote.

Beck was not in Davos, and not many of those there would fully share his analysis. But the mood has changed since the triumphalism at the end of the 1980s. It is becoming increasingly apparent to some political and economicists that the *laissez-faire* revolution of the past two decades has run its course. There is a growing demand for intervention.

As ever, America leads the way, and in many ways the most interesting aspect yesterday came from Larry Summers, the deputy secretary to the US Treasury, who made three points that effectively demolished the "End of History" supporters.

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Brokerage faces fine over flaws

FIDELITY Brokerage, the US-owned stockbroker, faces disciplinary action which could result in a six-figure fine after failing to solve computer problems that forced it to suspend sales last October.

The Securities and Futures Authority (SFA) said yesterday that the company would not be allowed to take on new business until the end of April. This means it will lose out on the key period for selling Personal Equity Plans.

The SFA warned that it could launch disciplinary proceedings once it was clear how serious the problems had been. That could lead to a fine of up to £250,000, while the lost business and cost of rectifying computer systems may run into millions.

Fidelity's problems relate to a computer system introduced last April. The software failed to process investments properly and to pay dividends on time. The company insisted yesterday that clients' money had not been at risk.

"I wouldn't expect any client to have experienced a material loss. But there have been delays in interest payments," a spokesman said. Fidelity has 35,000 clients and received complaints from about 1,000.

The SFA said good progress had been made but further work was needed before it could allow the company to begin selling again.

Fidelity Brokerage is an associate company of Fidelity Investments, but is managed separately and the investment arm is not implicated.

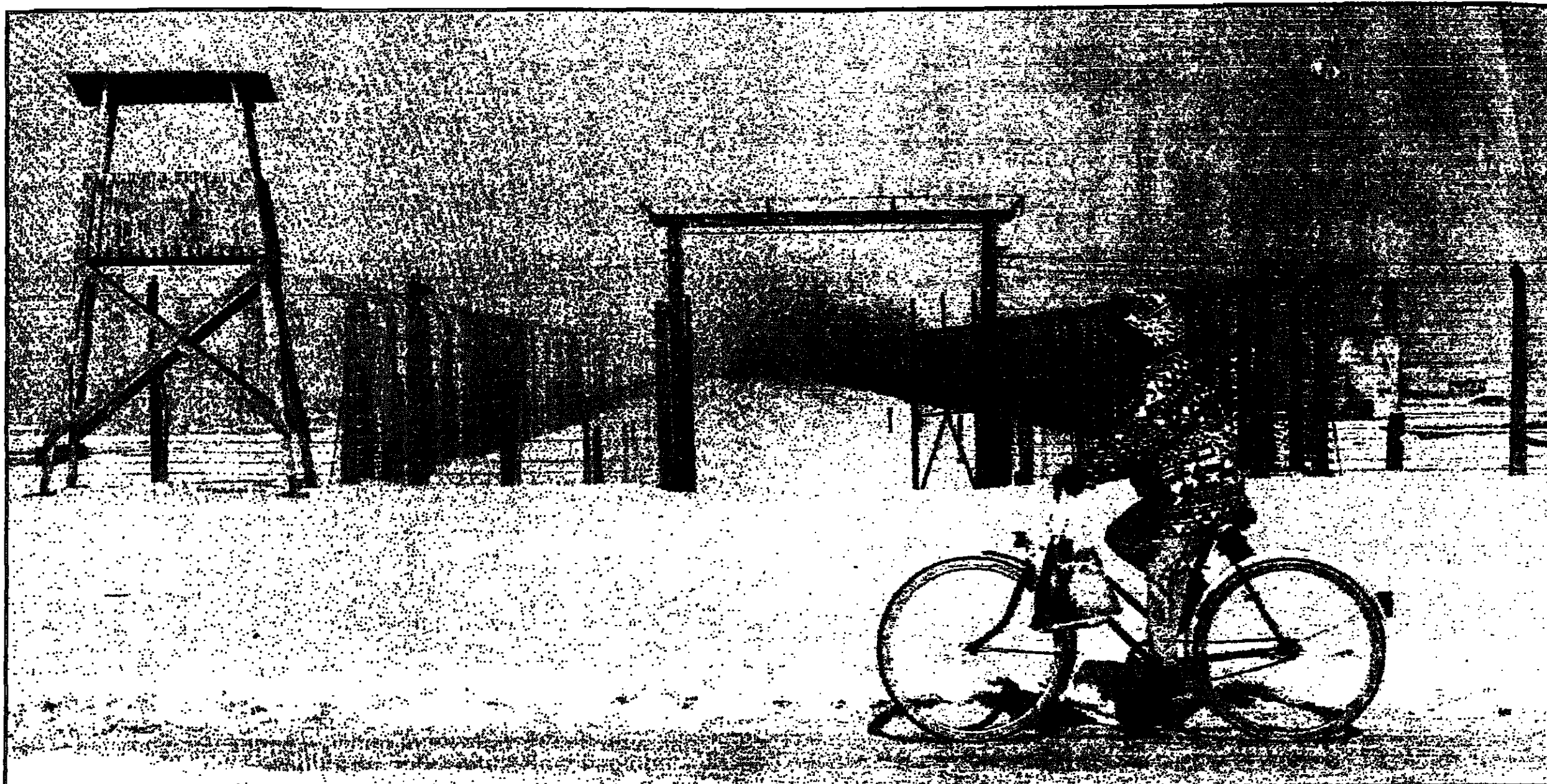
Tourist Rates — Bank Sells

Australia 2.04	France 8.84	Italy 2.548	Singapore 2.21
Austria 18.06	Germany 2.560	Malta 0.9910	South Africa 7.15
Belgium 2.91	Greece 406.00	Netherlands 2.8975	Spain 216.05
Canada 2.12	Hong Kong 12.17	New Zealand 2.27	Sweden 11.48
Cyprus 0.7885	India 57.92	Norway 2.23	Switzerland 2.23
Denmark 8.83	Ireland 0.9815	Portugal 258.25	Turkey 180.850
Finland 7.78	Israel 5.34	Saudi Arabia 5.00	USA 1.5745

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli sheqel)

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FinanceGuardian



The 52nd anniversary this week of the Allied liberation of Auschwitz death camp coincided with Swiss debate about what they owed victims of the Nazis

PHOTOGRAPH: ALK KESLIGZ

The shaming of the Swiss

Legacy of Holocaust haunts cash haven.
MARK MILNER in Paris
and **JOHN GLOVER** in Zurich report

IT WAS only a meeting yesterday between Israel's prime minister and the Swiss president in Davos that prevented the crisis over Jewish banking deposits from spinning out of control.

But president Arnold Koller's deep regret to Benjamin Netanyahu for the "monstrous, unspeakable wrong" of the Holocaust and his promise to ferret out "the full truth about the troubling time of our history" has come too late to prevent his country's carefully nurtured image from being tarnished.

Not only has the nation and its powerful banking community suffered what United Nations secretary-general Kofi Annan described on Thursday as a "public relations disaster", but the debate has also in the past few days led to the resignation of Switzerland's ambassador to the US and threats of a banking boycott in New York.

Mr Koller said a calmer atmosphere would help the work of two international commissions set up by Switzerland to investigate the so-called dormant accounts in Swiss banks — deposits made by Jews seeking to escape from Nazi persecution which have never been claimed. Swiss banks have professed an inability to trace the depositors' heirs.

The ambassador, Carlo Jäggi, was forced to resign after reports that he had described the row over the accounts as a "war". Jean-Pascal Delamuraz, Switzerland's economics minister, initially called the campaign by Jewish groups "blackmail" — a remark for which he subsequently apologised.

The atmosphere of mistrust deepened last month when it emerged that Christoph Meili, a nightwatchman at Union Bank of Switzerland, one of the big three Swiss banks, found in the shredder room at its Zurich headquarters two containers of documents, some of which referred to the second world war.

Mr Meili took some of the documents to the police and to the Hebrew Congregation of Zurich. UBS said its archivist had believed the documents were of no importance but acknowledged "a grave mistake". Its chairman, Rob-

Committee chairman Alfonso D'Amato uncovered sensitive information from the US archives concerning the movement of Nazi gold. As more and more information came into the public domain, Mr D'Amato called for action from the Swiss authorities, a campaign endorsed by Labour MP Greville Janner in the UK.

The Swiss Bankers Association responded last September with a statement saying that a survey of its members showed that there was some \$140 million (£17.8 million) unclaimed in dormant accounts. It was not a figure that commanded much credibility among Jewish groups.

"In 1982 they said it was \$7 million, in 1995 they said it was \$32 million. At that rate of progress if we wait another 30 years it will be \$150 million," says Elean Steinberg, executive director of the World Jewish Congress.

Jewish groups have been reluctant to put a figure on the amount they believe could be in dormant accounts, but the Swiss banks are facing a \$20 billion class action in the US courts.

Under mounting international pressure, the Swiss in-

stituted measures designed to tackle the problem not only of dormant accounts but also of Switzerland's conduct during the second world war.

The Swiss Bankers Association and the World Jewish Congress set up an eminent persons committee, headed by former Federal Reserve chairman Paul Volcker, to examine the issue of dormant accounts. It has appointed three international audit firms to help and is expected to report next year. The Swiss Federal authorities established a "Nazi victim assets" task force and appointed an international committee of historians with a wider remit.

Until last week and despite the pressure, the Swiss continued to resist one central demand — that they set up a compensation fund which could make payments to claimants ahead of the outcome of the detailed investigation into dormant accounts.

The reason was straightforward. As Marc Oepel, chief executive of another of the big three banks, Swiss Bank Corporation, told the publication *Finanz und Wirtschaft* in early January: "This idea [of a generous gesture] has come up before, of course, but first

and foremost we have our fiduciary duty to think of. We cannot simply do what we want with customer deposits."

The Swiss banks have emphasised the difficulties in tracking down the owners of dormant accounts. Accounts were held in branches rather than centrally. Names and account numbers were held separately for security reasons. Arguably it was the security and anonymity — as well as Switzerland's neutrality — which attracted those seeking a safe haven for their money.

ANOTHER problem is the high standard of proof the banks have wanted from people laying claim to dormant accounts. From the bankers' side that is simple prudence, but as one US newspaper acerbically pointed out: "There were no death certificates in Auschwitz."

Recent changes have made tracing accounts easier and, according to Switzerland's banking ombudsman, Hanspeter Hani: "I get full co-operation from the banks. In my experience they are eager to track down owners."

Critics are not convinced, however, that the difficulties are insurmountable. According to Mr Steinberg, the Swiss government recently gave his organisation a list of 53 accounts whose contents were handed over to the Polish government in 1972. Mr Steinberg says that with the accounts came the names of the depositors, heirs and/or financial advisers. The detail was sufficient to allow a British-based Jewish organisation, the Holocaust Educational Trust, to find one heir in a matter of minutes. This week the HET traced another.

The list is more than a means of making a point. There is a poignancy that serves as a reminder of the underlying tragedy. One of the people on the list deposited \$115,000 with a Swiss bank and gave a well-known Jewish centre in London as his address. Efforts to trace any record of him there have proved unavailing, suggesting he was one of many who failed to find sanctuary.

Despite reports of internal divisions within the Volcker commission, its conclusions are likely to command the international credibility that previous efforts to detail dormant accounts have lacked. But it is unlikely to be able to be definitive. So can the Swiss be expected to pick up what could almost amount to a blank cheque of unprovable claims?

Mr Steinberg chooses a different analogy. "If you take the toll road out of New York and if you take the third exit,

not the last, but you lose your ticket, you have to pay [the cost] for the entire trip. If the Swiss banks have destroyed documents, if they have lost their toll ticket, they have to pay the whole way."

The snag for many of the claimants is that time is not on their side, hence the pressure for an interim fund.

As Tomas Borev, head of the government-appointed task force liaising with foreign governments and organisations puts it: "The problem is that we have attacked the issue in a typical Swiss way, like a nation of watchmakers. We thought we were behaving in an exemplary way, with independent fact-finding committees and so on. For others we have not moved fast enough."

Mr Steinberg is one of the others: "Claimants have waited half a century. They are in the twilight of their lives. There should be an interim fund so that people who are flesh and blood, who are dying, should receive some measure of justice."

The signs are that he will get his way. On January 22, Rainer Gut, head of the third of the big three Swiss banks,

Credit Suisse, called for the creation of an indemnity fund for victims of the Holocaust, including their families.

He suggested that it should be financed by the government, central bank and the banking and insurance industries, with other business sectors chipping in later. Although he did not put a figure on the fund, he indicated it would have to be significantly more than \$100 million.

Like the banks, the government has got behind the idea of an interim fund and is seeing some reward.

Stuart Eizenstat, US commerce under-secretary and the Clinton administration's spokesman on dormant accounts, said on Thursday: "Confrontation would be counter-productive, it would be a setback. It would be a way of saying that, despite all the efforts they [the Swiss] have made, that those efforts, far from being admired and rewarded, were being punished."

The question of the Holocaust accounts has forced the Swiss to confront their country's role during the war. For some it has proved an

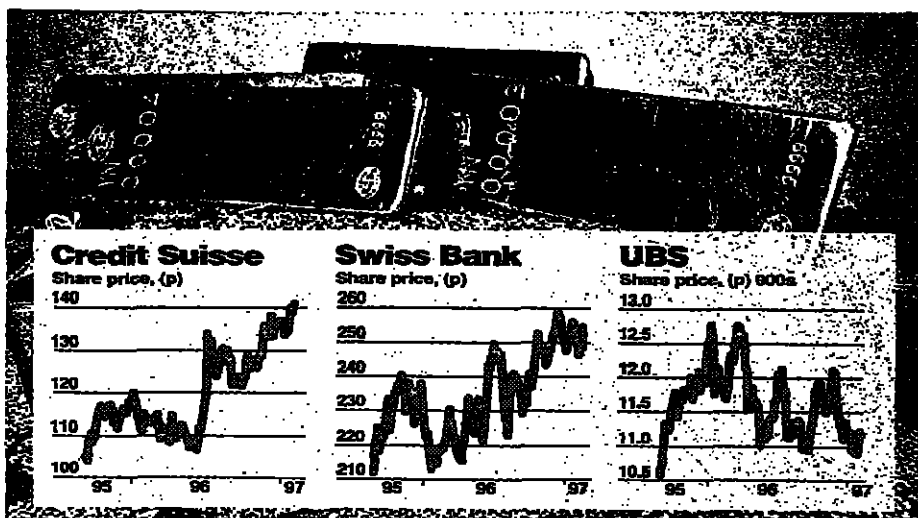
anguished experience. "I personally have felt ashamed by reports of our refugee policy during the war but those reports have come out recently. Before there was no public awareness," says Silvia Matile at the Swiss Bankers Association.

Others have been angered by the questioning of Switzerland's wartime role. Fears have been voiced that the question of dormant accounts has been raised as part of a plot to undermine Switzerland's position in the world's financial marketplace.

That view gets short shrift from the banks. Mr Oepel noted dismissively in his *Finanz und Wirtschaft* interview: "We have absolutely no indication of that at all."

The issue has come at a difficult time for the banks. Domestic business is being hit by an economic slowdown and bad property loans. The big three banks are trying to consolidate their positions in the fiercely competitive global banking market.

The Swiss president has promised prompt action. If he doesn't deliver, the banks will pay the price.



Chronology of events

● September 12, 1995
Swiss Bankers Association (SBA) says \$140 million in unclaimed assets in Swiss bank accounts.

● January 1, 1996
Guidelines for dealing with dormant accounts. Ombudsman the central contact.

● February 7, 1996
Edgar Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress (WJC), rejects the investigation. US Senator, Alfonse D'Amato, states that the Senate Banking Committee is planning a hearing. The legal commission of the National Council begins its work.

● April 23, 1996
Hans J Bar, representing the Swiss banks, joins hearings before US Senate Committee.

● May 2, 1996
The SBA and the WJC establish an independent committee to examine the statements of Swiss banks. Switzerland's role during the war is criticised. The Federal Council sets up a task force.

● June 21, 1996
The banks' ombudsman presents initial results.

● July 1, 1996
The Legal Commission of the National Council amends a draft of the "Federal Decree on the legal and historical examination of the fate of Jewish assets in Switzerland between 1933 and 1945".

● September 16, 1996
The British Foreign Office publishes a report on alleged Nazi looted gold in Switzerland. Reparations agreement with Poland dating from 1949 discussed.

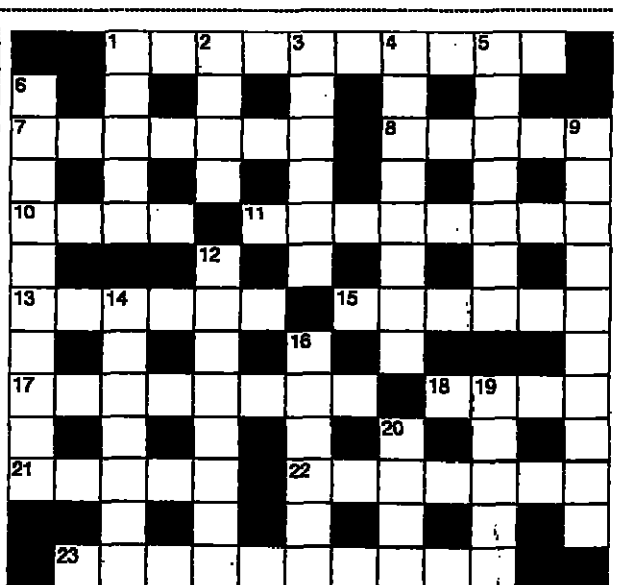
● October 1, 1996
National Council approves Federal Decree. Federal Council sets up a "Nazi victim assets" task force.

● December 1, 1996
The Federal Council appoints an international panel of historians. At the end of December the discussion concerning a "Holocaust fund" becomes more heated, due in part to remarks by Federal Councilor Jean-Pascal Delamuraz.

Quick Crossword No. 8349

1. MEDIAN
2. TRACTION
3. DUCK
4. OTTOMAN
5. LAND
6. AVARICE
7. UH
8. A
9. COMPOST
10. THEAP
11. KEY
12. ENCLOSE
13. KARD
14. A
15. B
16. D
17. GRAM
18. BACCARAT
19. O
20. U
21. UNEXAMPLD

Solution No. 8348



Across

- 1 Able to express oneself (10)
- 7 Reproach (7)
- 8 Invader from Germany (5)
- 10 Flabby or uneven walk (4)
- 11 Jump over (another child) (8)
- 13 Old bet (anag — miscant) (3,3)
- 15 Appearance (6)
- 17 Region (8)
- 18 Craving (4)
- 21 Type of lake (2-3)

Down

- 1 Book for stamps etc (5)
- 2 Amphibian (4)
- 3 Short stick as weapon (8)
- 4 Final bugle call (4,4)
- 5 With nothing due to the government (3,4)
- 6 Commotion (10)
- 9 Belladonna (10)
- 12 Discipline (8)
- 14 Measure of sound (7)

- 22 Badly brought up (3,4)
- 23 Film actor (5,5)
- 16 Binder or series (6)
- 19 Laconic (5)
- 20 Fat slovenly idler (4)

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The Guardian

the week



It is a huge social upheaval that has largely gone unnoticed: We are turning into a nation of people living solo. Are we in danger of ending up lonely and friendless, asks **Louisa Young**, or should we be glad to be on our own?

Now we are one

TO BEGIN with, says Lucy James, a designer aged 36, living alone was a delight. It was calm, clean, peaceful — marvellous in its way — though some people did think her lifestyle a little odd.

Then after a while the magic began to fade and she began to find her solitary existence at times "almost spooky". When she returned home she would find it exactly, in every detail, as she had left it that morning. The breakfast plate was where she had left it, her clothes were in the spot where she had flung them the night before. Nothing ever changed.

She found herself increasingly inviting friends round in the hope that they would stay the night. A woman friend lived on the sofa and broke the monotony — but that lasted only two weeks. "I found myself going slightly mad at home, as if I were the only person left alive in the world."

That feeling of less than glorious isolation will become familiar to a growing number of people, if this week's Social Trends report

from the Office for National Statistics has got its sums right. By the year 2020, we are told, one in three of us will be living alone.

One in three. That amounts to more than a trend. It's a massive shift in social behaviour. Solitaryness is emerging from being regarded as something abnormal into being a norm.

Human beings have always lived together, as parents, children, spouses. We have had to for warmth, for safety, for financial reasons, perhaps because it didn't cross our minds not to. Now we seem to be becoming a different kind of animal, one for whom solitude is no longer exceptional.

But do we want this? Some, from the Daily Mail to the right of the Conservative party, will leap to condemn this sea-change on impersonal moral grounds: the traditional family is sacred, and living alone is one result of its breakdown and is therefore immoral, irresponsible, just somehow wrong. Which is beside the point. It's happening. Some are choosing aloneness, others are having it forced upon them.

So what will it be like, this society so full of domestic page 14

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the week that was

Us on us

The British view

Neil Hamilton's smear campaign against the Express Advertiser following our publication of allegations surrounding the Westminster sleaze scandal speaks volumes. More serious is Mr Hamilton's attempt to force this week's Express Advertiser off the shelves, threatening legal action against newsagents displaying it. Strong-arm tactics from a man who claimed to stand up for the small businessman. *Willislow Express Advertiser*

Sir Patrick Mayhew must have taken leave of his senses. That is the only conclusion one can draw from his comparison

between the situation in Northern Ireland and the treatment of Jews in Nazi Germany. Who are Northern Ireland's Jews? Where is the Holocaust? The realities are much more complex than that. *Irish News*

Crumbling chalets, forgotten ballrooms — the perfect site for a prison. Home Office bosses believe Middleton Towers outside Heysham is the Prison Service's quick-fix solution to a rising prison population. Campaigner Margaret Campbell told the Citizen: "Of course it is going to lead to rising crime levels. We will start finding needles on the beach next." *The Lancaster Citizen*

Them on them

The global view

Guilt causes people to fear they will suffer harm after masturbation, but masturbation is a way of deriving pleasure, intones the Voice to string accompaniment. This you will hear on dialling a 1-8-8 number. China's new hot-line service. In a country where information is the sensitive issue of the day, the hotline can serve the need for knowledge of a populace that remains ignorant of basic facts. *Hong Kong Standard*

The Supreme Court on Wednesday rejected Ms Benazir Bhutto's petition against the dismissal of her government. The verdict means next week's

election will go ahead. A new element has been introduced by the president's assurance to the Jamaat-Islami that it will register murder cases against Ms Bhutto and her husband for involvement in the death of Jamaat workers in street agitations. Attention should be concentrated on making next week's exercise meaningful and honest; otherwise, we will move from one crisis to another. *Daily Dawn (Pakistan)*

A 50-year-old man committed suicide on Tuesday as he lost every penny with the collapse of the two most popular bogus pyramid schemes, Gjallica and Khaferrri. *Albanian Daily News*



took a bicycle out of the back of the car, rode off on it, then returned with a baseball bat. He then proceeded to tear his rage on his own car, smashing every window before riding off again. "I said nothing to him, related Brown, watching amused. 'I didn't think asking him for his insurance details would have been a very good idea.' It is possible that the assailant's own insurance company will not think smashing the car up voluntarily was such a great plan, either.

Anger of a more conventional nature was all the rage in Albania, where riots in every major town over a clutch of pyramid-selling scams have threatened the government of President Sali Berisha. It is hard not to feel desolate for the poor Albanians. After decades of suffering under the wrong type of communism,

the first face of capitalism they have been shown was distinctly the unacceptable side.

Look out for a religious revival there now, courtesy of the Scientologists. But, with thousands of Albanians having lost their savings in the pyramid schemes, don't expect to read that classic headline: "Tirana Booms Today". It doesn't. Among other recruits to the ranks of the furious this week were Rodney Eardshaw and Shirley Wilson of Huddersfield, who, a week after their elaborate \$8,000 wedding, discovered the vicar at the church ceremony was a teenage theology student on work experience. It meant they were not married in the eyes of God — who, apparently, is a stickler for his representatives on Earth having the right qualifications. The Wakefield diocese has

offered a free second wedding by way of compensation, but the unmarried couple have something more substantial in mind; they're suing.

An expected outbreak of Hammers rage at ailing West Ham United football club did not quite happen on Wednesday night (above). With their club plummeting through the Premier Division and the management apparently deaf to the £30 million rescue package on offer, West Ham fans were planning to invade the pitch waving red cards at the directors. In the event, having lost 2-1 at home to Arsenal, the supporters were too depressed even to riot. Dangerous stuff, this bottled-up rage. Ask the driver of a certain yellow Ford Sierra with recently broken windows. He's feeling much better for it. *Jonathan Margolis*

Suffer the little children - Gulf war revisited

This week last year

January 30, 1996

JOANNE Gillit and Tyrone Jonah were planning to have four children, but that's no longer an option. They don't dare have more after their daughters, Charlotte and Amy, were both born with abnormalities. Charlotte, aged three, has several benign cancer tumours and her younger sister Amy was born with a hole in her heart. "If we knew why as two healthy, young parents, this has happened we could plan ahead," Joanne says. "As it is, we have to live day by day."

Joanne is one of the many wives of Gulf War veterans who fear that vaccinations given to their husbands immediately before and during the hostilities may have caused deformities in their children. Exactly a year ago this week the Ministry of Defence launched fresh research into the mysterious Gulf War Syndrome, bowing to pressure from sick veterans who complain of a range of symptoms, from chronic weakness to depression and loss of memory.

There are currently 1,200 Gulf veterans apparently



suffering from the syndrome and 65 known families with deformed children, many of whom are suing the Government. A soldier, who prefers to remain anonymous, has applied for a vasectomy because he is terrified of having any

more children. His wife Caroline has had two daughters by him since he returned from the Gulf. Both children have webbed toes, they have one kidney smaller than the other, and suffer recurring high temperatures and defective

eyesight. "I feel guilty because I took the drugs when I went out there and now my children are paying for it," he says. According to the Gulf syndrome campaigners, children have been affected by chemicals carried

Hidden cost of war revealed

Matthew Wellbourne with his mother Sonia

through the man's sperm produced from an interaction between the cocktail of vaccinations and anti-nerve gas tablets (NAPS) given to troops in the Gulf. Christmas that that "five or six" injections against biological warfare agents were given to troops which the Ministry of Defence has still not acknowledged. It is feared some of the injections may have been experimental.

At nine months old, Matthew Wellbourne was diagnosed as having Perthes disease. This causes hip bones to crumble — a rare condition in children of Matthew's age. He is now five, and in a wheelchair. He also suffers severe respiratory problems, asthma and shaking fits. His father, Robin, has ailments which he puts down to Gulf War Syndrome and, like Matthew, experiences uncontrollable shivering. Robin and Matthew's mother Sonia have now divorced, because, due to the character change Robin suffered after the war, Sonia says her life has been turned upside down in the

last five years. "We got on fine before he went to the Gulf. My family has disintegrated and I'd like to know why. I'd feel very bitter if I discovered it could have been prevented."

Other families have decided not to risk having children. John Callaghan, whose son John committed suicide last May after suffering Gulf War Syndrome for five years, said John's wife, Mandy, remained childless for fear they might be deformed. He has met many veterans' wives experiencing chronic gynaecological problems since their partners returned from the war, and many now avoid unprotected sex. It could be several years before any conclusions emerge from the research as to concrete links between Gulf War service and child abnormalities. Joanne can only hope for her daughters' futures. Amy's heart condition has improved but fears about Charlotte's health persist. "Every time I go to the hospital I think this is when they're going to tell me it's a cancer. I don't want to know what's caused it so we can stop blaming ourselves for what's happened." *Emily Sheffield*

Now we are one

page 13 solitude? Will it be made up entirely of happy, successful people with charming flats in a desirable neighbourhood who go out five nights a week and home to their parents once a month? Or will it consist of distraught, successful women in their late thirties, all on the phone to each other talking about how their mother had her fourth at 43 and there's plenty of time? And a matching stock of recently divorced men, looking in amazement round a flat that contains only a whisky bottle, socks, and a portable telly, realising bemusedly that everything they had thought of as the life for the past 15 years of family life in fact belongs to their ex-wife?

Certainly a fair percentage of those who appear to live alone will have a girlfriend or boyfriend (also living on their own) at whose home they spend plenty of time; or their brother and his girlfriend kipping — just for a few weeks — on the sofa. Some presumably will be very rich plumbers, raking it in from putting shower cubicles into ever-smaller bedsits as former family houses are divided up. There will be 23 per cent more households in 2020 than now, largely as a result of this transition towards a singles society. They can't all be going to have houses. How are we going to afford it? And where on earth are we going to put ourselves? Some of us, still, will be living alone in our cardboard boxes.

And some will be the same old renegades: women stroking cats, waiting for the telephone to ring, and swearing that they like having a married lover because you get to keep your independence; men with combat magazines, Jean-Claude Van Damme videos, body-building equipment and a virginity they just can't seem to lose.

And some will have been dead for weeks, but nobody will have noticed. Living alone is a mixed blessing, and it will affect all of us. Not just because ways of becoming single — divorce, bereavement, children leaving home — happen even more

easily than ways of becoming attached, but because all around us other people will be living solo. The statistics show that solitude is an expanding phenomenon at all life stages. More teenagers and twentysomethings are flying the nest partly because of the growth in higher education, a trend only partly countered by economic pressures on young people to stay longer in the parental home.

Women are having children at a later age, and the proportion who remain childless is also on the up. Divorce and separation largely account for people living solo in their middle years, with the fastest increase in single households falling among men under 65.

And finally there's the older end of the age-scale, where rising longevity and the tendency of people to live independently rather than relying on the care of their children add up to more older people living on their own. For Fiona McAllister, a researcher at the Family Policy Studies Centre, this social upheaval demands a rethink in the way we attempt to analyse society. "Traditionally, we have directed our efforts into understanding relationships within households, within families. But this raises questions we haven't begun to tackle about how people maintain relationships across households."

Will we degenerate into a virtual society in which communication occurs by telephone or Internet, rarely face to face? McAllister doubts that, as "people will always value physical contact". But other possibilities present themselves. Will we fragment into two nations: the smug couples and the bitter singles? Or put another way, the frustrated couples and the carefree singles? Or will we take it as an opportunity to accept finally that people just live in many different ways?

And yet the alternatives were in her opinion worse: "If I moved in with someone, then unless it was with a boyfriend, that would have been like admitting that I was a lonely old bat, and that I was never going to marry and 'be normal'. I couldn't put any enthusiasm into setting up home with someone. I didn't have anything emotional thing with."

In the end she persuaded a friend to move in three houses down. She feels she's found the perfect solution. "We pick up shopping for each other. We pretend to live together when we want to, but we don't have to."

LUCY's grandmother Ellen is 83. She lives alone in the terraced cottage she shared with her husband John for 35 years until he died 15 years ago. "It's the stage of your life," she says. "I never lived alone before. I went from my father's house to setting up home with John, then the children were here. When they left, John and I thought we were lonely. Didn't know the meaning of the word."

Is she lonely now? "Yes. But I'm used to it. There's not much to do, but you don't want to think you're waiting to die. There's a widowed man in our street, a young fellow

with two little ones, and I babysit for him. They're like family now. Your own family ends up elsewhere, and it's nice to borrow someone else's."

Eileen's widowed man is Nigel Herriott, aged 37. "I lived alone for a few months once while my wife and I weren't getting on — well, she threw me out, more or less. I have never been so miserable in my life. The thought of that gas ring... It was like my life had been cut out of me, cut off like a leg. The children were babies. I made her take me back. Begged her on my knees. She saw a bit of loneliness too while I was gone, and we decided that we didn't like it. Now the children are everything to me. My mother died a while ago. Losing people makes you want people to be around."

That's the downside, to do with loneliness. Tom, a TV researcher in his twenties, is an example of someone who benefits from the upside. His shopping basket is loaded with "vodka, cigarettes and steak. That must be better than three giant-size packets of washing powder. It depends on how you look at it, doesn't it? Plenty of harassed people look in my basket at the checkout with this yearning expression, while they unpack six-packs of baby food."



"Lonely supermarkets, one little pork chop, one little pint of milk"

Will we degenerate into a virtual society, in which communication occurs by telephone or Internet?

"When you work all the hours God sends, with people all over you all the time, to get home to solitude is heaven. Peace and quiet, no demands," he says. There's no one to wake you too early, play music you don't like, have their unpleasant friends over, complain about you. "Other people want to watch telly when you're reading. They say 'Go and read in bed then'. I don't want to read in bed. I want to sit in my chair."

"I know some people do like to get married, but I can't see the attraction. Marriage and loneliness go together — you get used to having someone around, then you get divorced, or they die, and then

you're lonely which you wouldn't have been if you'd stayed on your own in the first place. "Ask him again when he's my age," says Lucy. "I dare say that some people are happy with their dog and their books for 70 years, but the older you get the more it affects you. I don't want some kind of cosy spinster life, but I promised myself I'm not moving in with anybody except Mr Right. Or the Earl of Right. I'm not fussy."

I canvassed a little more. My daughter, who is four, wants to live alone because then she won't have to put her toys away; 18-year-old Jim wants to live alone so he can bring girls home; 25-year-old Jane wants to live alone because Tracey is always borrowing her clothes without asking; 32-year-old Stuart wants to live alone so he can get a night's sleep without the baby waking him. "But only for a night or two. Then I'd want to go home again."

Nigel, aged 37, just wants his wife back. Richard, 40, is rather desperate to find a woman who might want to live with him, "but I've got a lot of bad habits by now. I'm afraid, rather ingrained. A woman might not like them."

Like what? "Eating paper." And then there's Eileen, who at 83, represents the largest group of people living alone — women over 60. Already, two-thirds of women over 75 are on their own and the trend continues as the population ages. Her conclusion: "You get used to loneliness."

The emotional line that seems to be emerging is that we see solitariness as a positive when we're young and healthy, with our freedom. But as Kris Kristofferson wrote: "Freedom's just another word for nothing left to lose..." The next thing we know, everybody else is living together, and we're landed with staying alone because there's nobody left for us to live with. Or so it seems.

Except — they are all out there. In 2020 one in three of us will be single and solitary. It would be reasonable to surmise that perhaps half — one in six of the population — won't like it that way. That's 10 million people who might like to come home to somebody else. Each other, perhaps. Clearly there is some kind of communication breakdown going on.

Some of the names in this article have been changed.

HAVE YOU BEEN PAYING ATTENTION?



1. "We should be brought before the Bar of the House of Commons and made to apologise." Who?
(a) Alan Clark
(b) Anthony Combs
(c) George Galloway
(d) Noel Gallagher

2. "I'm sure a Texan millionaire might be interested in it as a present for his wife." What was the editor of Tatler talking about?

3. The Naafi lost its key contract to supply food to the Ministry of Defence. What does Naafi stand for?

4. Scorpions are the safest; Taurans are the most dangerous. But at what?

5. Turkish students are "less small and more attentive" than their English counterparts. Who was looking forward to a change of air?

6. What is Bristol Young Conservative Richard Carter's unique claim to fame?



7. Who had a hard time getting into a country house, above?

8. 272-21. The final score in what?

9. 14 not out. Who?

10. 393-85. Whose record victory?

11. 12,000 and still going strong. What?

12. 37, and still the world's favourite model. Who?

(a) Barbie
(b) Cindy
(c) Naomi
(d) Jerry

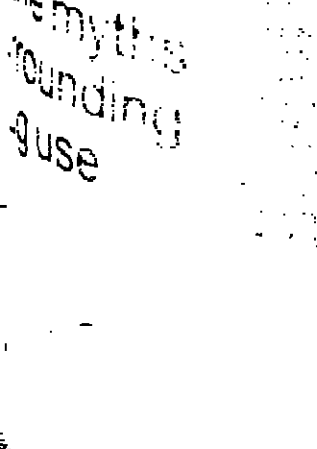
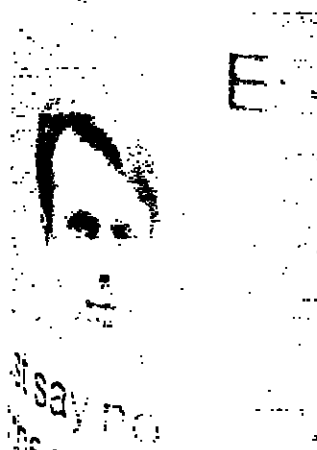
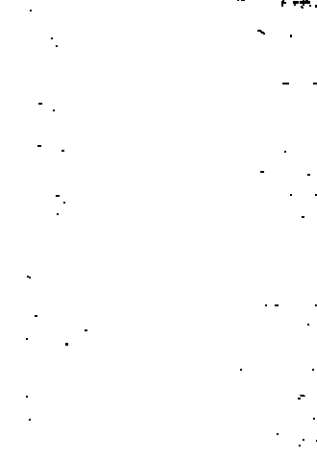
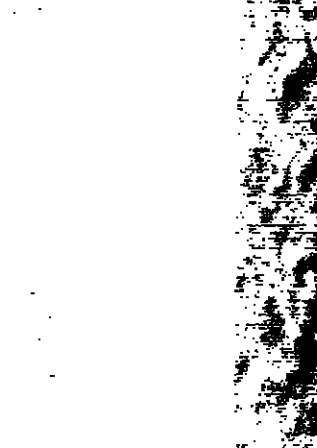
13. How did Ian, Welsh John and Swampy Inconvenience the High Sheriff of Devon?

14. "People understand hands and should be allowed to carry on using them." Explain.

15. In a poll, a third of all vicars were unable to name all 10 Commandments. What is the First Commandment?

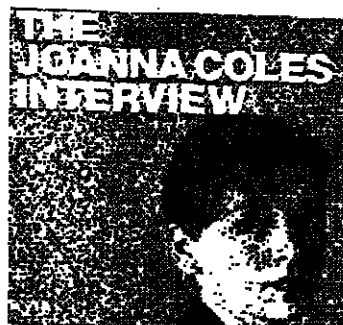
Answers, bottom left of this page

Sam:
lad:
I



Sam: 'I think actors are really nice Dad: 'I think that's true'

Indulgent father Timothy West and hyperactive son Sam have spent six months touring together



JOANNA COLES INTERVIEW

AS LUCK would have it I arrive early at the Old Vic and am handed the keys to Timothy West's dressing room. Oh what fun to snoop around a real actor's dressing room, what does he keep on his dressing table? Mmm, Fast Acting Pro-Plus, Odourless Garlic Perles, Olbas Pastilles, half a bottle of Benlylin, Nivea Talc, Sure deodorant, a small stained sponge and a bottle of Vintage Character Port.

As actors go, Timothy West CBE, is something of a vintage character himself, famous for playing the famous Churchill, Cromwell, Edward VII and Stalin stick out among his many outstanding portraits. For the last six months, he's been touring as Falstaff in Henry IV with his son Sam, and I am here to meet them both. I'm just inspecting a small framed tapestry proclaiming "If All Else Fails Read the Instructions" when Timothy bustles in. "Hello hello," he beams, settling quickly into a padded deckchair. Despite flu, he's so warm and smiley the dark little room begins to glow. "No sign of Sam?"

No sign of Sam, so we moan about arts funding until I suddenly recall a diary entry West wrote in January which read "Thursday: Interview with son, Sam. We're both quite good at interview flannel." Interview flannel? Uh-oh. Well at least I'm warned, so I bring our genial chat to a close and demand to know what sort of a father West thinks he was?

"I was quite indulgent," he murmurs slowly. "My own parents (also actors) tried to shield me from thinking too well of myself. My mother in particular formed the idea that I would become vain and boastful if I was congratulated about anything — so I wasn't much. I was determined not to replicate that. Sam and Joe (West's children by his wife, the actress Prunella Scales) were encouraged to think well of themselves but I don't think they got swollen-headed."

Three quick knocks on the door and in whirls Sam, swollen-headed through flu. "Hi Da," he grins, kissing his father on the cheek before untwisting a long burgundy scarf. "Give me the brief," he says to me. We're comparing your childhoods, I say. "Fraid I don't know much about your childhood, Da," shrugs Sam, already looking bored. Struck by their lack of physical resemblance — Sam is this and rangy, his father square and stocky — I ask what he was like as a son?

"Pretty terrible, hyperactive. 'Yes, that's true,'" says Timothy, struggling to sit up in the deckchair.

"I was very serious, quite clever and precocious, very precocious, seriously precocious, and um, so I must have been a bit of a handful."

"Mm," says Dad, "I think there was a time when you were trying to demonstrate to us how much more important and busy your life was than anybody else's."

"Er, when was that?" demands Sam, re-wrapping the scarf round his graceful neck rather crossly.

"Oh, it was a very short time," his father replies gently. "But it manifested itself in things like always leaving drawers and cupboards and doors open. And if you were looking something up in a newspaper you'd suddenly leave it and go off and do something else. One could walk into a room where you had been and there was a sort of extraordinarily busy person who has got no time to bother with boring details."

"I have absolutely no recollection of this at all," replies Sam peevishly. The tannoy starts hissing and an anonymous voice calls urgently for Mr Fiddler. "Phone Call for Mr Fiddler."

Sam West, aged 30, is probably best known for his convincingly brittle portrayal of Leonard Bast

in the film of Howard's End. Did he feel he grew up with the confidence his father was denied? "Up to a point, it's a very English problem this..."

Timothy looks worried and butts in: "But did you ever feel seriously Sam, that credit hadn't been given where it was due?"

Sam: "You still owe me dinner for my O-levels..." No, I remember always being encouraged academically. I didn't really care what people thought when I was little, I do remember devouring things at an extraordinary rate. I still do. But I don't ever remember being told I was too clever by half."

And for some reason I find myself wishing he had been. For as fast as I warm to his father, I am slower warming to Sam. He's colder, interrupts constantly, fidgets and seems unable to listen. Facing rudely around while his father speaks. Dad on the other hand, looks touchingly enchanted whenever Sam opens his mouth, beaming proudly.

"Confidence is quite important as an actor," Sam continues. "At school I was a reasonably shy person and the sort of acting at school was show-off acting. I wasn't like that, and I'm still not like that. Sometimes I wish I were more of a show-off, and (looking at his

father) I wish you were too. I think we could both do with just knowing we deserve to be there and be paid and be watched for being there. I'm not quite sure what he means by this.

Dad: "Mm, mm, I think it's a British thing."

Sam: "It's a distrust of indulgence and I think it's marvellous."

Dad: "Yes, yes."

Sam: "It's what makes our theatre great. English actors don't indulge a situation they deal with it. Cope. Marvellous!"

We seem, without warning, to have strayed into luvvie-speak. Do the two of them find it easy to work together? "You could write a lot of journalistic guff about it but it wouldn't be true," says Timothy. "I think of him as Hal and he thinks of me as Falstaff."

Sam starts sneezing theatrically and cries: "I wonder if people who are married get these sort of questions? I don't think they do! I get the impression that behind a lot of these questions there's the assumption that working with someone you're related to is a real nightmare. Do you get that impression, Da?"

"Ah yes, oh I see," says Da. But it is unusual for parents to work with their children so closely, many people would hate it.

Da: "It's acting, you're always working with people on a deeper level than you are, say in aerobics, namics or marine reinsurance."

Sam (suddenly): "I think actors are really nice and it really needs saying."

Dad: "I think that's true."

Sam: "Not enough people say it."

Dad (grinning): "We are really nice."

Sam: "Actors are often very attractive, they're very revealing of themselves and physically very accomplished people!"

What's brought this on, I wonder? Actors get a wonderful press, open any magazine and there's reams of obsequious stuff. Both burst out in unison, "Oh no, no, NO! Come on, oh no."

Sam: (Holding up a hand) "No, no, this is my quarrel, I picked it. Behind that dreadful word luvvies is the idea that we're all shallow and insincere! If an actor is accused of murder the headline always reads Actor Accused of Murder, not Man, 35, Accused."

But if it was a politician, I protest, it would say "Politician Accused of..."

Sam: "Might do. Look, I don't have a bee in my bonnet, but someone tried to sell me insurance recently and I filled in a client pro-

file form, and he said: 'So are the rumours we hear about actors true?' I said: 'What rumours?' and he said: 'Well do you have any children?' And I thought: 'Hey, wait a minute! I've just tapped into something very interesting here! This is what insurers think actors are like!'

Dad (nodding): "Yes, Yes!"

"Girl in every port — baby in every rep. I can't deny this feeling about us is out there!"

"The thing that gets me," his father starts, and Sam bursts into a noisy coughing fit. "Are you all right?" "No!" whispers Sam melodramatically.

"The thing that gets me is that if an actor expresses an opinion, be it about politics or social policy or anything, then just you wait for AN Wilson, Paul Johnson or Bernard Levin to write a diatribe about actors!"

But why does he care what that trio of goblins thinks? Surely the Wests have given far more pleasure than Wilson, Johnson or Levin clamped together?

Dad (grumbling): "Oh it's an abiding prejudice."

Do they feel hurt for each other when criticised?

Sam: "I don't read my reviews and I'm trying to teach him not to!"

Dad: "Of course, all negative criticism is hurtful but sometimes you learn from it."

Sam: "Well I don't believe you can learn from critics. We disagree about this, I read them when the play's over."

Dad: "Mm, I think Sam's right. I get them a few days after the plays opened. I certainly wouldn't read them on the morning after. But I do think reviews can be helpful."

Apart from their mouths, I still find it hard to believe they're related. Do they share similarities as actors?

Dad: "I think we have the same attitude to what we're actually doing, which is to interpret writing for an audience. Our chief responsibility is to the dramatist."

Sam: "Well to the words anyway."

Dad: "The words, the words."

Sam: "I quibble with your word dramatist."

Dad: "Mm, well to solve the problems of the play by making one's interpretation truthful, clear and interesting."

Sam: "That's a mantra. Absolutely. I think a lot of actors believe that even if they don't think they do. (Gnomically) I've spent a lot of time trying to define myself differently to that. But I haven't been able to."

And contaminated food. And it might be argued that at least we can stop our children from taking drugs; but of course, we can't.

We can only give them as much information as possible and beg them to be careful. And try not to imbue drugs with the forbidden fruit status that makes them so tempting. Nothing so makes people want to do something as telling them they can't. If parents have not learned that, we have learned nothing.

I hope that my daughter will never experiment with drugs at all; but then, I hope she'll never put me in a home, and it's bound to happen sooner or later. I'm just glad there are positive role models out there for our young people. Brave, committed, public-spirited, young men and women, tunnelling for all their worth to salvage something of rural England. And Noel Gallagher, who writes a good tune, votes Labour and makes some good points about drugs.

And heroin addicts might say that they can function perfectly well but that is highly questionable. The successful doctor whose story

If Liam had not been busted for cocaine we'd have started to wonder what today's rock stars are coming to

of heroin addiction was spread across the papers two years ago turned out to have been one of the main architects of the Government's health reforms.

It might be considered to be in poor taste to make light of drugs. But we're all very light-hearted about drink. When Sir Nicholas

Scott was found face-down in the gutter, seemingly inebriated, it earned him an affection that almost wiped out the memory of his hit-and-run driving incident. His daughter, Victoria, with whom he had clashed over rights for the disabled, went public in his defence, never once referring to him as "Alcopops". In fact, the nation might have rallied to him in response to the persecution by his constituency party. But he wrecked it all by saying that it wasn't the alcohol; it was the pain-killers. In other words, it wasn't the drink, it was the drugs. If he'd said, "Yes, I was pissed", he'd have been a hero whether it was true or not.

This forces me to rehearse the tiresome argument that drink kills many more people than drugs. Admittedly, there is a cold inhumanity about statistics. If your child has died because of Ecstasy, it's not much consolation to know that many more children are killed by cars, domestic violence, poverty

seemed to be about to throw away his whole career because of the stress involved in moving house. It looked as though the world of Britpop might spawn a whole series of tabloid revelations headlined "My concealing hell!" and "Don't look back in Ikea!" If Liam hadn't recently got busted for cocaine, we'd have started to wonder what today's rock stars are coming to.

But cocaine is not as much a part of mainstream British life as cannabis. In my young day, the term "pot" was obsolete but, now settled in the suburbs, I find that most smokers of it are too old to know that nobody calls it that any more. "Pot-smokers" are people who go out on to the patio to do it. When one was in the full bloom of youth, it seemed impossible that the mention of a proscribed drug could ever occur in the same sentence as the word "patio".

If anything, cocaine is less respectable than it used to be. It

has a nasty bourgeois decadence about it, partly because of its role in the city boom of the eighties. It is prohibitively expensive to most ordinary, hard-working people, who might appreciate more than a cuppa before they embark on a day's toil.

Actually, I have to say that tea's not strong enough for me any more, and it doesn't help the bowels to move in the way that coffee does. I'm not going to set off down the rocky road that leads to laxatives, I have to caffeinate-up in the morning.

There are a few people holding down responsible jobs who start the day with a line of cocaine. But they are frequently irritable and jumpy, rather as if they had drunk too much coffee. It is probably best to work with as few substances in the blood as possible. I know that many great songs and poems have been written under the influence of hallucinogens, but the words are always magnificent bollocks.

Just say no to the myths surrounding drug use

LAST year, his brother, Liam, seemed to be about to throw away his whole career because of the stress involved in moving house. It looked as though the world of Britpop might spawn a whole series of tabloid revelations headlined "My concealing hell!" and "Don't look back in Ikea!" If Liam hadn't recently got busted for cocaine, we'd have started to wonder what today's rock stars are coming to.

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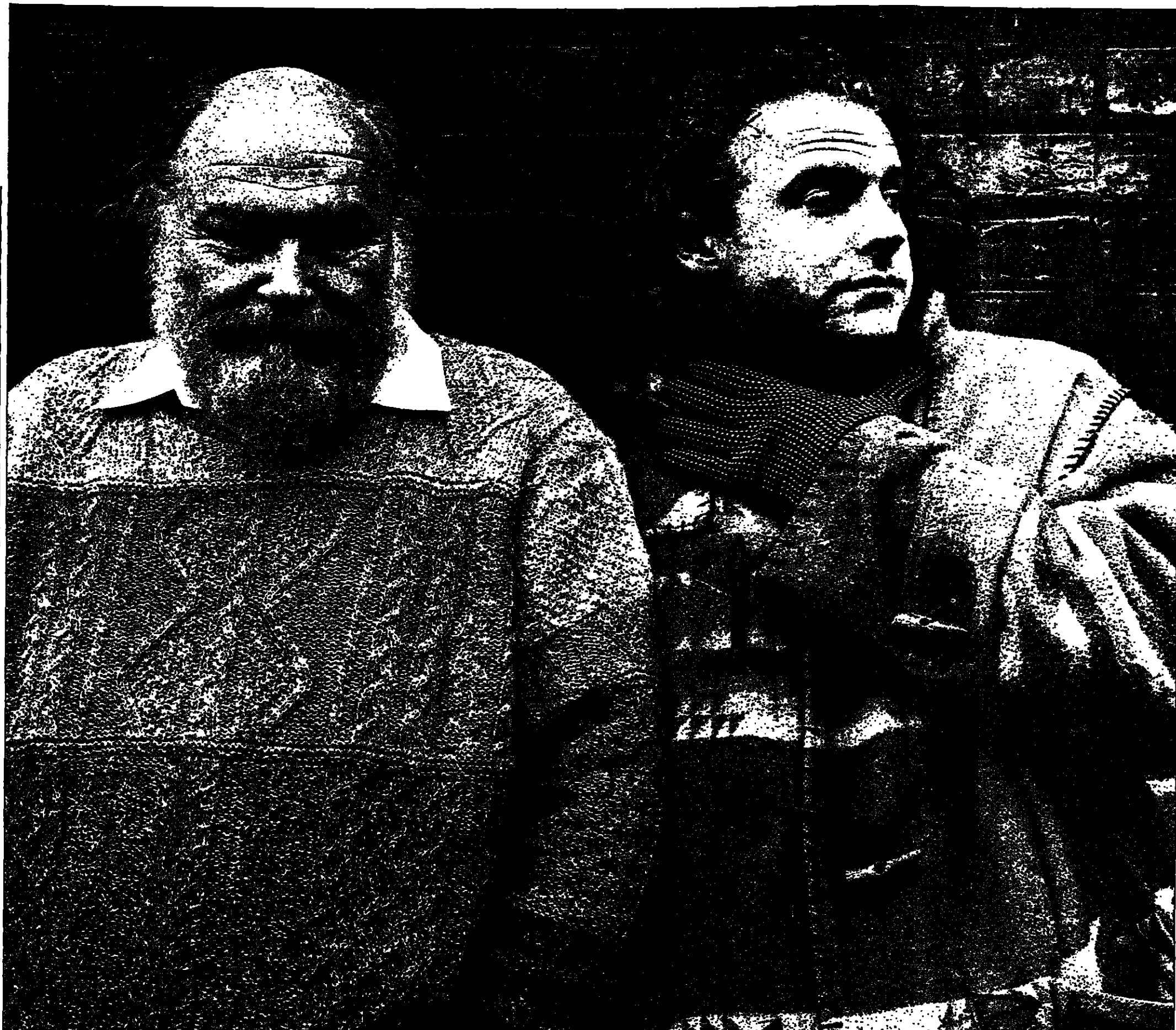
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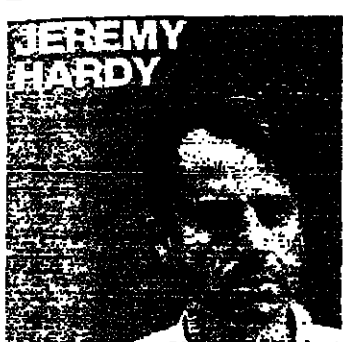


Relative values... Timothy (left) and Sam: 'There's an assumption that working with someone you're related to is a nightmare'

PHOTOGRAPH: EAMONN MCCABE

'Did you ever feel that credit wasn't given where it was due?'

'You still owe me dinner for my O-levels'



JEREMY HARDY

Just say no to the myths surrounding drug use

The answer is blowing in the wind

HEAD
TO
HEAD

Bernard Ingham has found a new crusade to replace his passion for Thatcherism: hatred of ugly wind farms. But, says eco campaigner, **Jonathon Porritt**, he's just stuck in the past – wind power is the energy of the future

Dear Jonathon,

IT BEGARS belief that you, a professional environmentalist, can support wind farms which are wrecking our upland landscapes. There can be only one conclusion: either you are blinded by greenery or you are aesthetically dead. God save our environment from environmentalists.

My objection to wind farms is not to wind power as such. Indeed, I would favour the harvesting of the wind if it could be done economically and unobtrusively. But my experience in 1979, as the Department of Energy official responsible for the so-called benign and renewable sources of energy, persuades me that wind power's role is always likely to be marginal.

Why? First, it is uneconomic. The hills of Cornwall, mid-Wales, my native Pennines and Cumbria would not have been ravaged by wind farms but for government subsidy dressed up as an attempt to prove the technology.

Second, it is unreliable. You cannot run a great industrial nation on wind power when no electricity is generated when the wind does not blow and when turbines have to be shut down when it blows too hard – over about 55mph.

Third, it produces minuscule amounts of electricity. The average wind farm of 15 turbines does not generate enough juice to move an inter-city train out of the slings. And fourth, environmental damage. Wind power is capable of providing large amounts of electricity only if vast areas of our glorious hills and mountains are colonised by forests of turbines each higher than Nelson's Column. I care too much for our countryside to have it sacrificed on the altar of neo-environmentalism. So should you.

Yours sincerely,
Bernard Ingham,
Vice-President,
Country Guardian

Dear Sir Bernard,

NICE TRY. But you're wrong or misguided on all four points.

First, wind power is not uneconomic. Yes, it has enjoyed a subsidy (a tiny fraction, by the way, of the subsidy gobbled up by the nuclear industry over the last 50 years), and that subsidy has helped bring costs down to the point where it is now cheaper (in pence per kilowatt hour) than nuclear power, getting very close to coal, though still much more expensive than gas. But it's getting cheaper all the time.

Then, your reliability point is just silly. No one claims that wind power could provide 100 per cent of our energy needs in the UK. It never could. But it can complement other energy sources very effectively.

Third, if the amount of wind energy is still minuscule, that's partly because defenders of nuclear and fossil fuels (often posturing as defenders of the British countryside) have done everything in their power to thwart its development. Windpower already provides enough electricity for a city the size of Bristol and could provide up to 10 per cent of UK electricity by 2025, creating 13,000 new jobs in the process.

As to aesthetics, you hate wind turbines and I love them. To you, they're lavatory brushes in the sky. To me they're beautiful and compelling symbols of an efficient, sustainable future. But as I have asked you before, why aren't you campaigning with equal bombast to rid this country of the scourge of electricity pylons?

As one of yesterday's most notable men, I wouldn't expect you to care much for the future. But wind power is a crucial part of the renewable revolution that is about to sweep across the planet.

Nuclear power is simply irrelevant; and as almost everyone now accepts, the use of fossil fuels has

to be cut if we want to ward off the potential horrors of climate change.

You endlessly assert your concern for UK plc. You've conveniently forgotten that we once led the world in wind turbine technology until your political masters (or should I say mistresses) all but wiped that industry out in the 1980s.

You certainly had no interest in the environment then and your concerns today, I suspect, have more to do with your continuing obsession with nuclear power than with any real concern for the British countryside.

Yours sincerely,
Jonathon Porritt

Dear Jonathon,

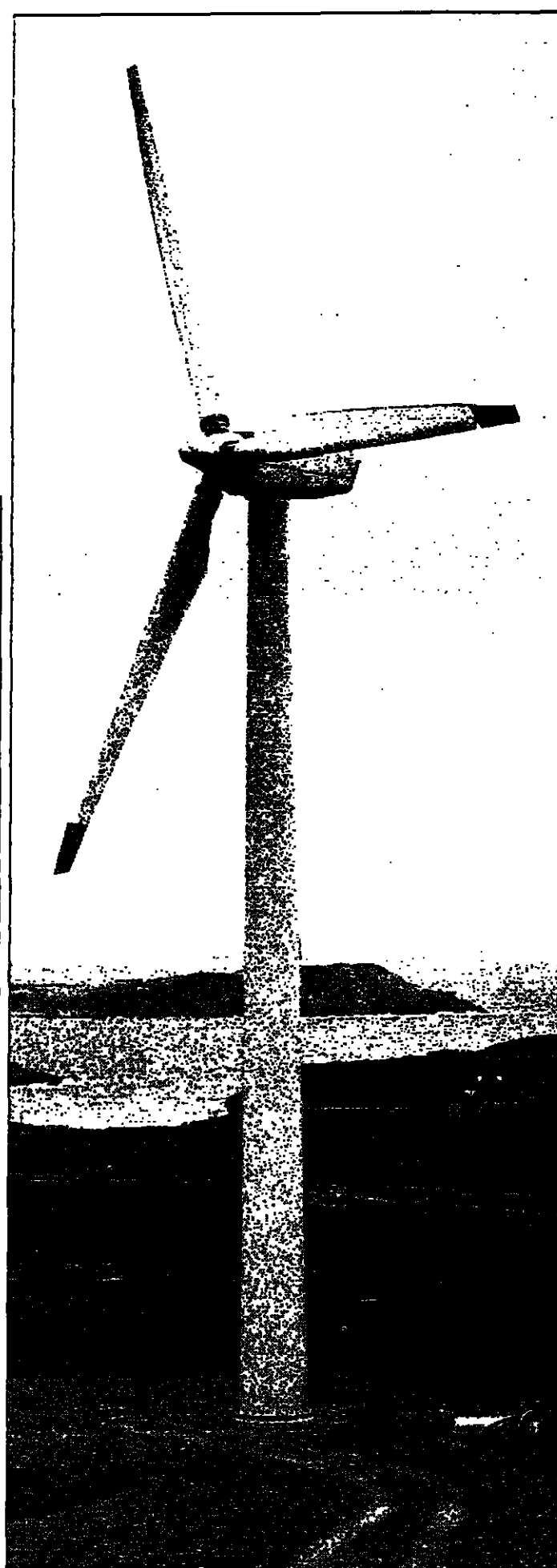
YOUR petulant determination to kill the messenger serves only to underline the poverty of your arguments.

If uneconomic wind power is getting cheaper all the time, why are wind farms being shut down in California now that subsidies have been withdrawn? Why has a leading wind power firm gone bust there? And why is the Swedish energy minister considering ending subsidies to renewables because they are not an economically viable alternative to nuclear energy? Dare you suggest a future for British wind energy without subsidies?

Of course, wind power can – expensively – complement other forms of energy. But since it is not a reliable and continuous source, it will not shut a single fossil or nuclear-fuelled power station. John Redwood confirmed this when he was Welsh secretary. So much for wind power warding off climatic change!

I do not defend fossil or nuclear-fuelled electricity as such. But, as a realist rather than an idealist who naively thinks industrial Britain can be powered by symbols, I do not see any viable alternative on the horizon. Last winter our 550 wind turbines contributed on an average day only 60 megawatts towards peak demand of 50,000 megawatts. Only nuclear could replace fossil fuels. It has the advantage that it does not produce greenhouse gases.

I was interested in the environment and countryside before you were born to wreck them, and



A blast from the past or the winds of change? Wind farm at Cemaes, Anglesey. PHOTOGRAPH: CHRIS THOMSON

hate electricity pylons, too. You confirm my judgement that it would be highly damaging to our countryside to place its future in the hands of blinkered "environmentalists" who find wind turbines beautiful, even when clustered on hilltops. God save this green and pleasant land from greens.

Yours sincerely,
Bernard

Dear Bernard,

I THINK you've rather missed the point about the role that renewables will play in meeting the UK's energy needs. It's not that existing plants have to be closed before the end of their operating life, but rather that increased energy efficiency and year-on-year increases in renewable energy sources will remove the need for new fossil fuel or nuclear power stations. It's a process of displacement, not overnight substitution.

Your real problem, however, is that the future is a closed book for you. You have no conception of the looming threat to the world from climate change, and no guilt in imposing on future generations the huge cost of managing nuclear waste and redundant nuclear power stations. You're not just a classic NIMBY (Not In My Backyard) but a classic NIMSPOL (Not In My Span Of Life), obstinately fixed in the present without a scintilla of vision for the future.

Finally, I have never argued that the wind industry could establish itself here in the UK without subsidies. But once the price of fossil fuels rises to take account of the huge environmental costs their use imposes on us (ie we have the kind of level playing field that Thatcherites such as yourself are always banging on about), then a mature wind industry will indeed be truly competitive without the need for any further subsidy.

Something of a contrast with your beloved nuclear industry which survives only by dint of massive ongoing subsidies 40 years after we were told it would provide us with unlimited electricity "too cheap to meter".

Yours sincerely,
Jonathon

Dear Jonathon,

YOU HAVE two substantial points. The first is that the more efficiently we use energy the fewer fossil-fuelled or nuclear power stations we shall require, always assuming that the sheer growth in demand does not offset the gains in efficiency. The second is that increases in the prices of fossil fuels could eventually make wind energy competitive without subsidies.

But you resolutely refuse to face up to wind power's unreliability. Since it can never guarantee to supply a given amount in a given bulk, it can never, however cheap, supplant those forms of electricity generation – presently coal, oil, gas, nuclear and hydropower – which can.

That should be obvious to you by now, for your environmental movement has for decades been trying to price nuclear electricity out of the market by campaigning to raise its costs at every turn. Yet where has it got you? Heavily subsidised wind power on a good day still meets only an infinitesimal

amount of average demand – and at grossly disproportionate cost in damage to our upland landscapes for which you care nothing.

I may have had my moments and have less time left on this earth than you. But it is clear that you are yesterday's man stuck with yesterday's technology. That technology is being ditched as useless across the world. It is also rejected by the National Trust, the Countryside Commission, the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales, the Countryside Council for Wales and the Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland. Yet Porritt the Polluter praises its pestilence. God save us from "visionary greens".

Yours sincerely,
Bernard

Dear Bernard,

WIND power is not being "ditched as useless across the world". There are 17,000 turbines operating in the State of California alone. One thousand new turbines were erected in Germany last year. Denmark generates nearly 1 per cent of its electricity consumption from wind. Four million people in Europe now get their electricity



Porritt (left) Green campaigner and Ingham, ex-Thatcher aide

from wind power. Your constant (and presumably deliberate) misrepresentation of these facts does your movement little credit.

Secondly, I am well aware that there are many organisations who are concerned about wind power, and I respect their views. But unlike Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace and my own organisation, Forum for the Future, they are not thinking about the whole picture, merely about the aesthetic and landscape issues. Important though these are, they are nonetheless subjective and often very narrowly focused.

What's more, with sensitive siting, following strict planning guidelines, these concerns can and are being addressed. And of course you grossly exaggerate the level of opposition to wind farms. A whole string of independent surveys have shown that on average around eight out of 10 residents support their local wind farm. Unfortunately, as you know, around three quarters of all planning applications for wind farms are currently being rejected, depriving both local communities and the nation of new jobs, new investment and significant CO₂ savings. So exactly which country do you aspire to be the guardian of? Certainly not the UK.

Yours,
Jonathon

Swampy and Sir George: two tunnel visionaries who have emerged blinking into an unwelcome limelight



WATCHING Sir George Gardiner leave the meeting at which he was dethroned, I thought of someone else who had emerged blinking in the light earlier that evening: Swampy, the A30 tunnel protester. Swampy looked like a man who had spent a week under the earth: Sir George, with his lank hair, pallid skin and tiny glazed eyes, looks as if he'd spent the last year in his grave. Like Swampy, he preferred to work underground in the maze of conspiracies he helped to construct at Westminster. Like Swampy he was obsessed by a cause which holds only the dimmest interest for most other people. To the Tories of Reigate, he must have been almost as otiose as Swampy: bizarre to look at, irrelevant to their lives, answering his own private demons.

When Michael Grade said he was leaving Channel 4, the sobriquet "TV's Pornographer-in-Chief" was dragged out again. Rupert Murdoch's Sun was vituperative about programmes such as Dyke TV and Brookside. But recently, channel-hopping on cable, I came

across a film called Secret Games 3. It was about a woman with majestically large breasts who goes to work in a brothel because her husband is too busy to satisfy her. The copious sex was about as explicit as you can get, and, of course, it was on Rupert Murdoch's Sky Movies.

I've no objection. I enjoyed the film, and watched almost to the end. But I wonder why Mr Murdoch finds this medium-core porn acceptable, while his employees claim to be outraged by the much milder stuff on Channel 4. I suppose it's because Channel 4 is trying to depict real life and real sexuality, while Sky is interested in the commercial exploitation of sex. To modern capitalists, anything which isn't meant to make money is in itself obscene.

BILL CONNOR writes from Heywood, Lancashire, about the Police Bill, and claims by recent home secretaries that they knew nothing about bugging or phone-tapping. Mr Connor says he worked as a postman in Whitechapel, London, in 1946. "I noticed how the local communists were spied on. At that time they had an MP for Mile End and quite a few councillors. None of these people ever got their mail without it went upstairs to be examined. The indoor investigation man was never off the sorting office floor during the preparation of mail for delivery time, making sure the usual addresses were taken off the frames for their journey to some secret hide-out upstairs."

"The local head detective was never out of the office, there was always new addresses taken off for examination. Swapping yarns

with the local telephone engineers, I found many of them were employed full-time, tapping away to their hearts' content. How Callaghan and Carr have no knowledge of it beats me."

I think I can answer that. The Home Secretary would be the last person anyone would tell. He might have tried to stop it.

AS YET more paranormal nonsense crashes over the airwaves (the latest is Fortean TV), there is some good news. America's best-

To modern capitalists, anything which isn't meant to make money is in itself obscene

known psychic, Jeane Dixon, has died. She was always described as the woman who predicted the assassination of President Kennedy. Some even claimed she forecast the date and time, and Lee Harvey Oswald's name. In fact, all she did was say that an (unnamed) Democrat would win the 1960 election, and would die (she didn't say how) during his first or second term (as many presidents already had). Sadly, as polling day approached, she changed her mind and predicted victory for Richard Nixon.

Oh well, you can't win 'em all – unless you're a psychic. By ignoring her innumerable failures (the

Vietnam War would last 90 days, the Soviets would be first on the moon), and by exaggerating her "hits", she won a world-wide reputation and a fat income for meaningless, contradictory blather.

I SPENT a morning surfing the Internet with my friend Wendy Grossman, who's writing a book about "the border disputes between cyberspace and real life". Wendy is rightly angered by people who boast that they have no knowledge of the Net, as if this was a cause for pride. On the other hand, once you get into the system you realise that it is a separate world, quite unlike the one we live in. I was reminded of first visiting America; it has the same sense of freedom, of limitless opportunity, of self-indulgence blended with a single-minded determination.

We cruised round alien abductions (loonsies or pranksters – impossible to tell on the Net – offer to have you abducted), movie gossip (the main topic is who's a closet gay, with lots of surprising names). Every new virtual magazine (such as Bill Gates's Slate) calls forth an instant parody (Slate). You find yourself doing bonkers things, such as calling up every speech by Michael Fabricant, but it doesn't matter because there's always something else two keystrokes away – Pamela Anderson in décolletage, chat about feminism, a nifty "are you good enough to join the Army?" quiz game.

I was quite lost in this beguiling new land, and a little scared. I know that if I do hook up I'll be drawn in and forget work, family and friends.

SMALLWEED

FIRST THINGS first: yesterday was the 50th anniversary of the birth of Franz Schubert, one of the greatest benefactors in the history of humanity. The BBC gave us five hours of Schubert yesterday evening, and had earlier run a skilfully heralded programme in which the pianist Andrzej Schifano talked about the composer's music and played it, with a matchless blend of erudition and love. Elsewhere, the event was largely ignored yesterday.

Whether or not Schubert deserves to be rated one of the half-dozen greatest composers according to someone's academic criteria I neither know nor care. It is because his music speaks directly to me that I love and honour him so; as do so many thousands of others across the world.

JOURNALISTS, the actor Hugh Grant told us this week, are "moronic scum". He had clearly never met two who have died in the past 10 days in their early seventies: the former deputy editor and columnist of the Telegraph, Colin Welch, and Dr Ian Munro, who worked for 36 years for the Lancet, for 12 as editor. Like everyone else, Grant would surely have recognised Ian Munro as a good, honest and generous man. Having qualified as a doctor at Guy's at the very time when Nye Bevan was coaxing the NHS into

existence, he loved and cherished it, and promoted its interests with the journal he served with unwavering fidelity. Every injury done to the service by politicians, particularly when Margaret Thatcher was Queen, hurt him as if the wound were his own. Colin Welch was a man of ingenuity, charm, and huge erudition. You could not have a conversation with more than two minutes with him without learning something – decorative, intriguing or profound – which left you feeling deprived for not having known it earlier. In the league of well-stocked minds, his was Harold's. He loved anecdotes and diversions, following the sensible teachings of Herzen, who says early on in his autobiography: "I do not in general mean to avoid digressions and disquisitions; every conversation is full of them, and so is life itself." As well as carrying a treasury of anecdote in his head, he became, not least because of his turbulent private life, a rich subject (see the obituaries) of anecdote too. I reckon even Hugh Grant would have succumbed.

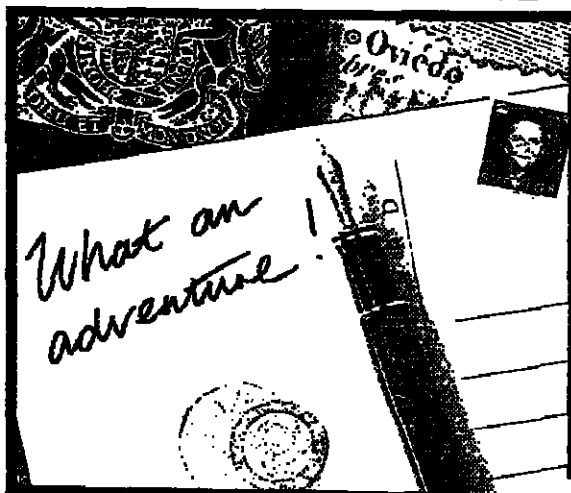
THE PRESS briefing after the Chequers meeting last weekend on the Tory manifesto took place in a nearby pub, the Bernard Arms at Great Kimble – the very same pub which once tried to close its doors on John Major and Boris Yeltsin. The Times was rather pleased about that. Only in Britain, it guessed (probably wrongly) could such a thing happen. It wasn't even as if the Bernard Arms was a famously good place to drink, the paper alleged, "but every so often propinquity to Chequers makes it the ganglion of political communication".

This sentence has a moral for all pubs that aren't doing too well. Almost every week nowadays, Smallweed seems to find himself in the near-empty snug of some struggling inn, nodding in agreement as one habitués says to another: "Tell

you what's wrong with this pub, Hermione – it lacks the kind of propinquity which would make it a ganglion of political communication."

It's a pity about "propinquity", though. I love the look of this word on the page, so neat and proper, minding its ps and qs; yet it has to be said that those who employ it are frequently up to no good. As for instance: "The electric propinquity of fame" (Sunday Times); "The poignant propinquity of the unattainable" (Evening Standard); "Like the man who danced with the girl who danced with the man who danced with the girl who danced with the Prince of Wales, such specious propinquity brought great kudos" (the Guardian, I'm afraid). Or worst of all this: "The true streaker unconsciously senses the leitmotif and zeitgeist and some ethereal hand plucks at her bra strap. She is overcome by the propinquity of the moment, and the propinquity of the motor drives. Like the vestal virgins of antiquity, she responds with a free-form jig to the green shoots of monetary spring..." I've decided to spend you the rest of my pastiche? No. It's the never-knowing, underwritten Sunday Times columnist A GILL.

CLAD all in black, with a violent hair-do to match and a swinging pectoral cross, the Home Office minister Ann Widdecombe thundered this week at Labour turbulence over hunger strikes by asylum seekers. Who was it, wondered for ages, that she reminded me of? Finally, faintly struck: Archbishop Makarios, the spiritual and political leader of Cyprus before independence, whom the British, sensing a trouble maker, packed off to the Seychelles. Having failed to land the managerial job at Manchester City, could she have a future, I wonder, as an archbishop in the Greek Orthodox Church?



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July 1, 2015

As Steve Biko's killers face the Truth Commission, **Donald Woods** hopes South Africa's healing process will emphasise justice over revenge

Can the killers ever find peace?

AND SO the chickens of 1977 are coming home to roost. This week's announcement that five men would apply to South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission to confess to the killing of Steve Biko was a dramatic breakthrough and a striking continuation of that tragic story of 20 years ago.

And the Truth Commission, revived in some quarters as being a device to let killers off the hook, has had a week or two of spectacular successes. They have also flushed out the killers of Matthew Goniwe and his fellow victims from the Uitenhage area, and former policemen have been emerging at a dizzying rate to testify to past crimes.

It was September 1977 when Biko was beaten into a coma in the Eastern Cape city of Port Elizabeth during interrogation by Security Police officers, and when they couldn't revive him they drove him 1,000 kilometres in a Land Rover to Pretoria, where he died two days later.

He had, by the age of 38, become South Africa's leading anti-apartheid personality still at large, though he was under banning orders, forbidden to travel, write or communicate publicly or to speak to more than one person at a time. The authorities feared him because of his work with the Black Consciousness Movement he had founded and led.

The Eastern Cape Security Police were notoriously brutal, and the South African government took a chance in letting them question Biko because there was a real risk of harm to him, and the Vorster government knew

this would be a disaster for them. Unfortunately, Police Minister Jimmy Kruger was a weak man who liked to court popularity with his security police by giving them a free hand with political prisoners.

When they found they had gone too far in beating Biko, Kruger tried to take the heat off by claiming Biko had died after a hunger strike. At a provincial congress of the National Party Kruger jokingly agreed with one delegate that it was "democratic to give prisoners the democratic right to starve themselves".

Within days, though, the starvation story was abandoned, because I had gone with Biko's widow to view his body at a small rural mortuary and it was obvious he had lost no weight from his normally bulky body. It was equally obvious that he had been badly beaten up, with marks of blows to the head, which explained why we had been given the runaround by police and mortuary officials before finally tracking down the body.

In the limited form of inquest that followed, it emerged that Biko had been brutally and callously treated, and few observers believed the new security police version that Biko had bumped his head on a wall during a scuffle with them.

What also emerged was that nine security policemen had access to him in his last days. Their names were published in 1978 in my biography of Biko together with the allegation: "One or more of these nine struck the blows that killed Steve Biko."

The five who came forward to confess this week were familiar to

me — they had been among the nine identified then. They were Col Harold Shyman, Lt Col G Nieuwaard, Warrant Officers R Marx and J Benke and Captain D Siebert.

Another of the nine was Colonel P Goosen, who died several years ago after being promoted to the height of Police Commissioner, and the remaining three are War-



Victim: Biko, feared as the prophet of black consciousness, was killed in a police station

rant Officers W Wilken, B Coetzee and J Fischer, believed to be living in Pretoria.

Now that the first five have come forward to confess, there may be additional testimony which links the remaining three to the crime, or they may be moved to confess themselves before being subpoenaed.

But two of the main culprits in the cover-up — Police Minister Kruger and Prime Minister Vorster — are both dead, and so far

none of the state doctors who saw Biko in prison has volunteered to testify.

It seems, however, that they will have to, as the Commission has announced it will pay particular attention to their conduct. Two of them were later struck off and one of them, Dr Ivor Lang, says he doesn't see why he should be required to face more questioning. Probably, however, he will have to revise his attitude and testify.

Though amnesty is by no means automatic, its prospect, should the Commission be satisfied contrition is genuine and confession full, has undoubtedly brought these killers out of the woodwork. Most of the families concerned are prepared to forgive the killers of their loved ones if they feel there is genuine sorrow and provided they disclose all that happened.

Steve Biko's mother, Alice Biko, said shortly before her death last year: "Yes, I would forgive my son's killers. I am a Christian, and we Christians do forgive. But first I must know who to forgive and what to forgive, which means I must be told fully what happened and why."

The rest of the family have been reluctant to agree, but may have to now that prosecution is not a real possibility in the absence of evidence. The Truth Commission route at least supplies the vital ingredient of finding out what happened, which, in the final analysis, is the most important thing.

Simon Wiesenthal, the Nazi hunter, said what he wanted was justice, not revenge, and that is what the Truth Commission and the South African people are in effect saying when they embark

on this unique experiment in national reconciliation.

They are trying to break new ground: not to repeat the mistakes the Germans made after the Nazi era by trying to sweep away the past too soon. The South Africans want to lance the apartheid boil as soon as possible, to let the poison drain out for the whole nation to see, so as to begin the healing process and create at last a healthy future without the burdens of the past.

There is, in the process, a price to pay, and in some circumstances killers are being allowed to walk free. But there's the rub — how free is free in a country that knows you for a killer?

The killers of Steve Biko will be identified, tested and tried in the crucible of the Commission, and they may ultimately even be forgiven. But how free will they be in the new South Africa that knows all about them? How peaceful will their lives be? How peaceful will the rest of their days be in the new democracy in which they will forever be remembered as the killers of one of the nation's great heroes?

To forgive is one thing; to forget another. And the fulfilment of justice does not always require a prison sentence. Sometimes it is more a question of conscience and perpetual remembrance.

Donald Woods was editor of the *Daily Dispatch* in South Africa until arrested and banned in 1977 for publishing details of Steve Biko's killing. He lived in Britain until his return to South Africa this month to teach journalism in Johannesburg.

Floored: Allegations of foul play and even violence have crept into the sport

PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN SMITH

Ballroom dancing, soon to become an Olympic sport, is not all sequins and genteel elegance. **Luke Harding** discovers the darker side of the dance floor



Last tango in Cheam

ADARK Thursday night in Cheam, behind the modest facade of a row of shops, a genteel art is being practised. Slender young women in pleated skirts glide across a maple floor, guided by well-scrubbed youths with earnestly puckered faces.

A waltz strikes up and, in the dance studio painted in faintly camp pink and green colours, couples twirl and arch effortlessly in time to the music. In the brightly-lit foyer decked out with white garden chairs (the impression of a neat suburban patio) attractive young men and women talk pool of Bournemouth and Blackpool over coffee.

There is elegance, yes, a lot of sex, undoubtedly, and much tradition thrown into the beguiling mélange which is British ballroom dancing — cruelly fixed in the public imagination by its grinning television parody, *Come Dancing* — is at a watershed.

Like the Roman empire at the time of its decline, the activity, which began more than 70 years ago as a ritualised mating prelude for the upper classes, is under threat. At its gates stand the twin barbarians of professionalism and competitive ruthlessness.

Cast in the role of the historian Gibbon is Harry Smith-Hampshire, himself a former champion and notable expert on the Viennese waltz. Smith-Hampshire, a competition judge who has been dancing since before the war, has watched with horror as the pastime he so loves has been sullied by a new version of an old trick: the professional foul.

Writing in this week's *Dance News* — ballroom dancing's *Widen* — he complains about the "pre-planned" and "cold-blooded deliberation" with which some dancers have been trying to get one up on their rivals.

The archaic traditions of ballroom dancing are under threat as

never before as the prospect of Olympic recognition draws closer. Aggression on the dance floor has reached such levels that professional coaches and other judges have drawn up an official code of conduct to stamp it out. Complaints range from "dangerous dancing" to harassment of judges and waltzing in the wrong direction.

Couples out to sabotage opponents "backtrack" — move backwards against the anti-clockwise flow of other dancers. There is no blood as such, but the cunning manoeuvre can disarm the opposition by denying them space and throwing them off their stride.

Backtracking infringes on the ancient principle of "floorcraft". With good floorcraft, gentlemen take care to ensure that their partner is not put at risk by high-speed collisions.

So who are the culprits, the *Vinnie Jones* of the waltz, rumba and cha cha? Not university students, apparently, who have embraced ballroom dancing with a cheery post-modern fervour in recent years and take part in inter-varsity events. Nor the novices, or lower-grade competitors, whose ball dresses are lovingly se-

quinned by mums. No. The villains, according to Smith-Hampshire, are the professionals who compete in the increasingly lucrative tournaments across the world. "We must equally assume complexity by one or more of the coaches who influence their thinking," he notes.

There are other views of what is going on that could be called the Euro-sceptic or of the Sir George Gordiner variety. "The foreign couples are the worst," one seasoned competitor chipped in yesterday.

The new code of conduct is sorely needed. Last October the leading Norwegian dancer, Kim Rygel, was decorously whizzing his partner round the dance floor when another competitor backed into his knee. He was crippled for six months. In a spirit of gentlemanly magnanimity, Rygel shrugged off the injury and charitably described it as an accident. But was it sabotage?

Injuries on the dance floor have reached record levels. One top amateur has only just returned to the competition circuit after another dancer damaged her cartilage with an unseemly high kick during the rumba. Backtracking is to

blame for many of these collisions.

"It's like turning your car round on the motorway and driving the wrong way. It's ludicrous, it's a very stupid tactic," Smith-Hampshire mutters.

And there are other dark arts. Auditors increasingly complain they are being harassed by couples on the dance floor, who insist on dancing only feet away to attract attention. This blatant ruse is understandable — in the open roads of a championship judges have five seconds to assess the merit of each couple on a crowded floor.

But it often backfires, resulting in "judge-bumping". Recently, adjudicators have lost their notepads, pencils, and even spectacles after being flattened by over-zealous dancers.

The International Olympic Committee has agreed that ballroom dancing is a "sport" but as yet refuses to grant it full medal status. Dick Palmer, general secretary of the British Olympic Association, takes a dim view of it, as do many other luminaries in Britain's sporting firmament, including Sebastian Coe, who regards it as a limp-wristed sport.

ing *parvenu*. "It's not going to be recognised at the next Olympics in Sydney and I think it's highly unlikely it will be accepted in the future," Coe gloated.

Top dancers, however, feel the tide is turning their way. After all, so the argument goes, they train like professional athletes with gruelling gym and fitness sessions, so why should they not be treated as such? If ballroom dancing had been recognised at Atlanta, Britain, which leads the world at the sport, would have bagged several additional golds to add to last summer's dismal tally. "It's only a matter of time," one dancer said.

The number of ballroom dancers has remained relatively static in the UK in recent years. Popular with the aristocracy in the inter-war years, it acquired a more demotic following in the forties and fifties with the arrival of *Mecca* ballrooms. When these closed, ballroom dancing consolidated itself along a motorway corridor which stretches from London to the Midlands and Manchester.

Worldwide the sport has boomed. In China, Japan, Ukraine, Norway, Italy, Slovenia,

and the Czech Republic thousands of young couples are learning to cha cha and foxtrot. Abroad, the sport is purged of its *faux* genteel associations.

Earnest Shanghai couples practice in municipal sports halls, while thousands of miles away their Moldavian counterparts learn to rumba. The best come to Britain to polish their art.

Top ballroom dancing couples can earn well in excess of £50,000 a year from lecturing, coaching and exhibitions here and abroad. Back in 1961, when Harry Smith-Hampshire glided his way to victory in the British championships, the prize money totalled £100. Now, winners earn several thousands. No wonder, then, there may be a temptation to kneecap your opponent.

So why do young adults take up ballroom dancing? The answer appears to have much to do with sex. Most top dancers are husband and wife couples. What, the prudent viewer might privately wonder, watching them move lithely across the floor, do they get up to on their nights off?

Dean Abraham, a coach who married his dance teacher, puts it thus: "It was girls actually that

got me into it. There were a lot of available female dancers. Men are in very short supply."

Lisa Hammond and her dance partner Gareth Taplin, both aged 20, who won the British Youth Championship at Blackpool last year, are lovers as well as dance partners. Both work as housing benefits officers in Sussex. "We weren't a couple when we first met but we are now," she says.

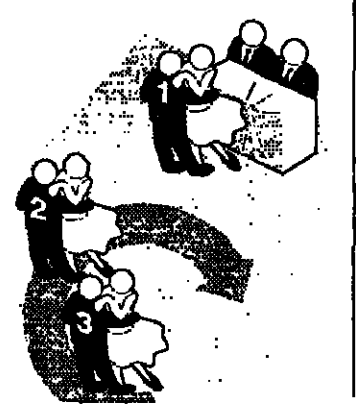
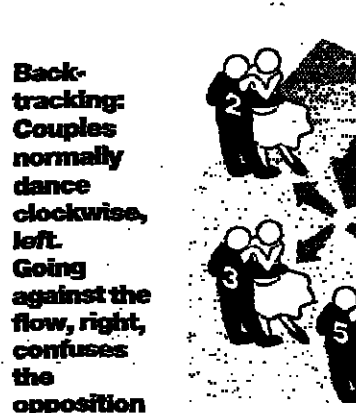
And then we have *Come Dancing*. Like an unwelcome dowager aunt who promises to stay for a few weeks but moves in with her in-laws for nearly half a century, *Come Dancing* has become a crude, over-painted synonym for the British ballroom dancing scene. The programme is loathed by serious ballroomers.

First transmitted to the nation's limited number of tiny round-cornered TV screens in October 1949, from the Ritz Ballroom, Manchester, its ratings followed the popular fortunes of ballroom dancing itself falling from 10 million 20 years ago to 2.8 million now. Mention the names Rosemarie Ford and Eric Morley, respectively *Come Dancing*'s presenter and former producer, and many sneer openly.

What dancers resent is the crude social snobbery of *Come Dancing*'s commentary team, in which the Chardonnay-drinking middle-classes poke fun at their social inferiors. "Whenever they mention someone is a sheet metal worker from Sunderland, who has sewn on all the sequins by hand, I feel like screaming," one middle-aged female enthusiast said yesterday. "It is horrendous." Lisa Hammond said. "It is so unrealistic. It is not all glitter balls."

Meanwhile, back at Dance Options in Cheam, Surrey, the session continues. A young man practices a waltz move without his partner. His eyes are fixed heavenwards in the manner of a medieval saint who had just been assured of his place in paradise. Lucky chap. Lucky chap.

The step-by-step guide to dirty dancing



arts

City of the lost

Glasgow has spent hundreds of millions reinventing itself. Shouldn't there be something to show for it, asks **Robert Dawson Scott**

SHOOTING STARS

Rising:
FREDDIE STARR



Up... "Zany" comic Freddie Starr carves a niche for himself by (Ho ho) eating hamsters
Up... Clings to tabloid notoriety by becoming hooked on Valium. And (Ha ha) almost cracking up
And away... Makes straight acting debut as drugs baron in Lynda La Plante's latest. Now that really is funny

Falling:
TONY FERRINO



Going... Steve Coogan launches his latest persona on a public who've not given the chance to be unsuspecting. Saturation coverage falls to woo the sceptics
Going... Perhaps the Latino crooner's charm will be less resistible in the flesh? Err... Run at London's Jazz Café has to be cancelled
Gone... Phenomenon album peaks in charts. At number 181

THEY welcomed the 600,000th visitor to the new Gallery of Modern Art in Glasgow the other day Ursula Henderson, a local, got a framed print of one of the gallery's most popular paintings, a copy of the book that accompanied its launch and a handshake from councillor Liz Cameron, the vice-chair of the city council's arts and culture committee.

It's a remarkable result for a gallery that was savaged by the art world when it opened (the art critic of this newspaper, collectors of choice, in fact, will recall, described it as "a travesty, a mockery, quite the worst arranged collection of dire purchases I have ever seen"). Even its supporters expected it to attract only 350,000 visitors in its first full year. Julian Spalding, the man who runs Glasgow's municipal museums and galleries and made all those "dire purchases", is cock-a-hoop. "Visitor numbers are vital," he says. "I'm totally shameless about it."

The city's arts nomenclature have become obsessed with turning culture into figures. They never tire of telling you that the number of creative artists based in the city grew by 70 per cent in the 10 years from 1985; that there are now upwards of 2,150 people working as creative artists; that the cultural sector employs around 9,000 people; that its turnover has grown by 41 per cent in real terms. Impressive? Not necessarily. Hundreds of millions have been invested in the city's cultural life in the past 10 years — £50m in 1990 alone, Glasgow's *annus mirabilis* as City of Culture. There ought to be something to show for it.

Yet now that the hype and the much-rehearsed Glasgow renaissance has died away, what is there? The city faces a future every bit as daunting as it was before the Glasgow's Miles Better campaign got the ball rolling back in the early eighties. The *grands projets* like 1990 and the Garden Festival of 1988 have left surprisingly few traces — an ermine cloak of activity which has been shed and is lying trampled in the mud", according to one of the minority who warned that it was never Glasgow's culture that was being celebrated.

There's the new concert hall, of course, and a couple of additional fringe theatres staggering along. Almost every week there's a new bar or restaurant, each one designed to within an inch of its life. And there are more visitors.

You see them sometimes, in shock, just yards away from the handful of showcase city-centre streets, having obviously taken some sort of wrong turning and run up against the other side of Glasgow.

This is the Glasgow of crumbling infrastructure, where major thoroughfares collapse into the sewers and the busiest motorway bridge in Europe is falling into the river. This is the Glasgow of crumbling buildings that remain undeveloped for years because the economy is so fragile that unless there are grants in place no one wants to take the risk. This is the Glasgow of crumbling families — not the beggars who have enough sense to stick to the smart streets, but the 34 per cent of the population officially living in poverty.

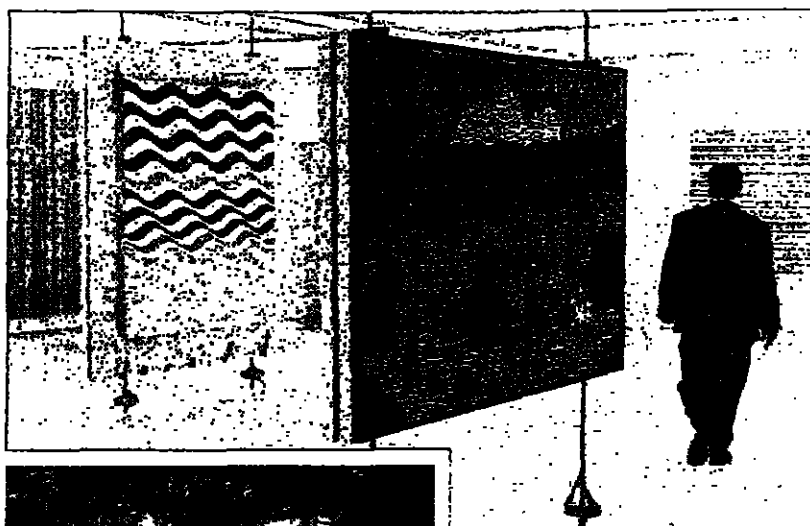
That's the trouble with the numbers game: anyone can play. Even concentrating on matters cultural, one has a sense of walking a tightrope of uncertainty. Until last year, those museum visitor numbers, for example, had actually been gently declining from a peak in 1990. Now, because of budget cuts, museums are having to close for one day a week, and are planning to lay off all the conservation staff. The condition of the Burrell Collection has deteriorated so much that its usually tight-lipped trustees have started protesting in the newspapers. Charles Esche, who turned Tramway into a gallery space innovative enough to win the Prudential Award, giving a generation of young Glasgow artists their first breaks, is moving on. Lottery funding for a major new branch of the National Galleries of Scotland in a landmark city-centre building has been refused.

In the performing arts, Tramway now rarely hosts the big, bold experimental theatre pieces for which it was rescued from the demolition squads — not least because, when it did, not enough people went. The Glasgow Philharmonic has gone into receivership. The Citizens theatre has turned into three spaces, which seems to have diluted rather than expanded its provocative and daring reputation. Mayfest, once the second-biggest arts festival in the UK, has stumbled from one identity crisis to another since 1990; its most recent director was off work most of last year with nervous exhaustion. Now he has to face up to a 10 per cent cut in the city's grant.

Unlike Edinburgh, host to the national institutions funded by the Scottish Office, virtually every aspect of Glasgow's cultural life is dependent on city funding. Celtic



GLASGOW WELCOMES



Two Glasgows... the City of Culture (top), home to the Gallery of Modern Art and Alasdair Gray (middle) battles the spirit of Rab C Nesbitt and the Gorbals slums (bottom)

Connections, the traditional music festival that finishes this weekend, has been a huge success again this year, but it still cost the city £200,000 on top of the £1 million it puts into keeping the Concert Hall afloat all year round.

So when the city sneezes, the arts get a bad cold. And this time the city's got pneumonia. Deep cuts are being visited on all Glasgow's cultural enterprises, along with just about every other aspect of life in the city. The Scottish Office is playing hardball with Glasgow, cutting its £818 million grant by £27 million. Two thousand council jobs are set to go.

Glasgow has been squeezed out of other sources of government cash too, for housing and develop-

ment. The Glasgow Development Agency has been dubbed the Glasgow Disappointment Agency by Govan MP Ian Davidson.

It all led the local evening paper to launch a Save Our City campaign last month, backed by the city's Labour MPs and the chairman of the Scottish Chambers of Commerce. But just days after it had begun, the front page splashed the story of 1,000 new British Telecom jobs coming to Glasgow. That neatly captured the duality of the city — all strutting confidence one minute, all craven introspection the next.

For 1999, Glasgow has another grand prize in hand, the UK Year of Architecture and Design. If ever there was an opportunity to construct a solid impression of a city,

this must be it. But as a forest of cranes rises on the site of the Buchanan Galleries, the largest shopping development in Scotland, this chance is being eroded. If the models and drawings are anything to go by, the great slabs of blank wall are unlikely to win any friends for the quality of the architecture.

"Glasgow is a magnificent city. Why do we hardly ever notice that," asks one of the characters in Alasdair Gray's *Lanark*, perhaps the only truly great novel to have emerged from the city so far. Sixteen years after it was published, its insight and sagacity seem more apt than ever. His answer is that, "Nobody imagines living here." Other cities, he argues, have been used by artists, in paintings,

novels, history books and films. Nobody visiting them is a stranger. But here? "What is Glasgow to most of us? A house, the place we work, a football park or golf course, some pubs and connecting streets. That's all." There is no bigger picture, no city beyond each person's own preoccupations, no context for an individual life.

The Save Our City campaign will play well in Glasgow because it creates a common enemy. The Scottish Office, the Government, anybody will do. But just as Scotland as a whole often identifies itself in terms of what it isn't — usually England — so Glasgow is better at seeing itself as the fall guy in someone else's story instead of the leading player in its own.

Too much costume drama? Don't be absurd, says Maggie Brown

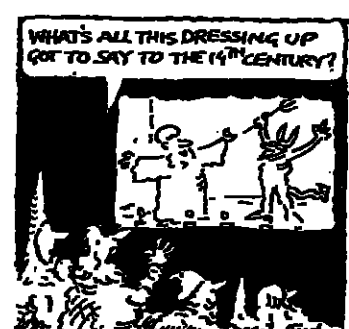
Pride not prejudice

Provocations

I DON'T know about you, but I'm looking forward to the first episode of *Nostromo* tonight. This should be exotic, ambitious stuff, a bleak story of murder, corruption and power set against spectacular shots of the Andes, aided by the fact that Mr Darcy — sorry, Colin Firth — looks great in jodhpurs. This is a project made to challenge.

But it would be so easy not to watch *Nostromo* because of the vicious build-up the press have given it. Being British means we love to knock our successes. This is precisely what is going on with costume drama at the moment. Even before *Nostromo* hits our screens, there have been concerted moves to brand this £9 million offering a turkey. "Will *Nostromo* mark the end of the BBC's love of costume drama?" wailed the Daily Mail. "It's already being branded a flop by the BBC itself," wrote a spiteful Sunday Mirror.

It is all rubbish, but rubbish



with an agenda. Costume drama is one of the modern glories of our small screen. But the critics are lining up to predict its demise, to encourage a switch in priorities back into gritty realism.

Whoa! They need to be challenged fast and hard. In case new projects designed to delight and entertain us are strangled before they are even born. The truth is exactly the opposite: the genre is capable of much greater development. The

revival has hardly had time to take root. The greats of world literature, from the Greek myths onwards, are just begging for the treatment, especially if sensible international co-productions can be worked out (*Nostromo* has Italian and American money in it).

For most viewers, the return to the classics, formally marked by *Middlemarch* two years ago, and followed by *Martin Chuzzlewit*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Emma* and *Moll Flanders*, has been long overdue.

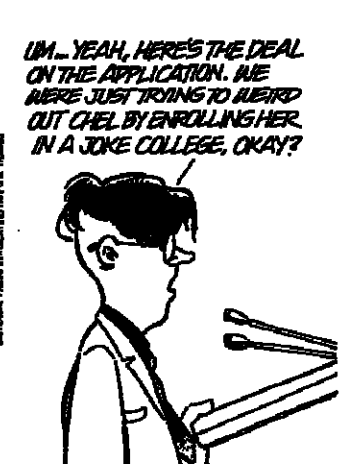
The ratings confirm this, as do the appreciation indices. Broadcasters hug the latter to their chests, but they reveal exceptionally high scores of more than 80 per cent. Television, as the dominant medium, is ideally placed to remind us of the wealth of literary back catalogue we possess. (Yes, I once tried to read *Nostromo*, but faltered.) And if we have to build upwards from surefire hits like *Pride and Prejudice* before we can tackle one-offs like *Mill On The Floss*, so be it.

The classics are the classics because they tell wonderful stories through strong characters, and focus on eternal verities — love, marriage, power, inheritance, death. And, frankly, I adore seeing sumptuous country houses, sprigged muslins and lovely horses.

There is the landscape too, whether it is rolling estate of Mr Darcy, central American jungle (*Nostromo*) or the bleakness of a Yorkshire moor (*The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*). It is a lot more interesting to watch on a cold winter's night than, say, *Prime Suspect*'s drug dealers terrorising inner-city Manchester.

Much of this "spare us from costume drama" move has been encouraged by the *Flop* Rhodes, which was a poor product precisely because it was documentary posing as costume drama. The BBC must also regret making *Ivanhoe*, whose only saving grace is some smashing horses and jousting. But a bad decision is simply that: a bad decision. ITV has *Jane Eyre* and *Far From The Madding Crowd* up its sleeve for later this year, but who knows what will happen then? Which is why I feel the genre needs support. Hands off costume drama. Let it grow up and go on delighting us.

Doonesbury



BY GARRY TRUDEAU



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STUART JEFFRIESFloral
trance

CHANNEL 4 was pushing up the daisies last night, bringing life to the dead land of winter with a colourful gardening show. "They're absolutely wonderful," said Bill Chudziak uncontroversially about a host of ruddy dahlias. And then he lost it. "And what about those flowers?" He held a Bishop of Llandaff dahlia between his fingers. "Wonderful, intense scarlet. It's slightly pubescent. It's just like thick red velvet." Chudziak co-presents this programme like a Junior Roy Lancaster, all floral eagerness and dirty fingernails. But, while age shall not wither Roy, youthful presumptuousness makes Chudziak faintly ridiculous. Slightly pubescent? This isn't *The Girlie Show*, Bill. There are 21,000 species of daisy, and only slightly fewer kinds of gardening programme. Bloom is a winning hybrid, suffused with flowing music from the obligatory piano, oboe and piano combo, and shouting the colours of high summer on to the screen to relieve the SAD souls of winter. That is what gardening programmes are for: to suggest a happier world to Friday night audiences who have spent the week labouring under blank grey skies. Thus, Chudziak leapt above a howling bank of heleniums that were huge-headed, unreflective and very yellow — just like *The Big Breakfast*. "They have a curious smell of chocolate and cheese all at the same time," he pro-

posed. One could only imagine. In this day and age, surely smell-o-vision should not be beyond the wit of television manufacturers?

His co-presenter is Anne Swithinbank, a woman with a name too perfect for such a job, but without, say, the delicious absurdity of Gay Search who presents *Gardening From Scratch* on BBC3 straight afterwards. Swithinbank, one suspects, is a computer-constructed, even washed hair, contrived, the obligatory of Jilly Cooper: the obligatory plaid shirt, a restful voice, and, above all, the engagingly jolly manner of a woman you can imagine having round for tea and sympathy — a herbal infusion and commiserations about your petrified window box.

Gardening programmes are never as restful as they should be, though. There's frequently an anxious note that cuts through the meandering incidental music and sumptuous visuals. "If you want to be with it, dahlias are things to grow, you know," said Bill. "They're really coming back in fashion." But the panicky world of fashionable aspiration should be obliterated from the timeless study of beautiful blooms. We want to be looking, maybe even feeling and smelling, but not cultivating and keeping up with the Joneses.

Where on television can one seek restful ease? No small question since TV, quite properly, is often used by viewers for that. Yet natural history shows team with bloody murder; cricket is no longer reassuringly pointless, but underscored with national humiliation; the rest is busy, too busy, with information and images.

The only outlet that explicitly panders to this need to be soothed is *Landscapes*, a cable channel that consists of soporific pictures of the natural world and equally unchallenging ambient music. But who'd subscribe to cable for that alone? Perhaps television is the precisely wrong medium to engage with for those who seek chiefly to be lulled into forgetting the week's stresses. On Fridays, more often than not, we should turn it off.

WAVE RIDING
ANNE KARPThe bad
news bear

TODAY he'd be described as a sad man with a fetish for unattainable women; then he was called the Poet Laureate. Although *Softly Croons The Radiogram* (Radio 2) was ostensibly a programme about the records that married Jim Parker's felicitous music to John Betjeman's verse, in fact Betjeman's obsession with strapping females kept ambushing one's interest.

This is the sort of feature usually described as charming: presented by George Melly, it was full of amiable recollections of the pleasures of adding music to the Poet Laureate's oeuvre. So why did it make me so testy? Melly declared that by the age of 68, Betjeman had become the nation's favourite teddy-bear. But beware national teddy-bears (Melly is in danger of becoming one himself) — they fluff away the critical faculties.

Today, Betjeman's nostalgia doesn't charm quite so much, while the programme did play some endearing poems and tunes (Parker is maestro of pastiche — his Palm Court music was particularly good), a little Betjeman goes a long way; at his weakest, he sounds disconcertingly like Pam Ayres. The title of Radio 4's new late-night comedy series, *Truly, Madly, Bletchley*, suggests that its author believes the mere mention of certain English provincial towns is side-splitting. It isn't. Purporting to be Britain's first public access cable radio show, run by the people from Bletchley District Council, it only proves that setting a radio programme in a radio station (the third Radio 4 comedy pro-

gramme) has become the last resort of the unimaginative.

More extraordinary is the view of local authorities it enshrines: with broad-humoured, nerdy, petty provincial characters, it's a kind of *Carry On Up The Council* minus snuff. The author doesn't seem to have noted the revolution in local Government today: replaced by blow-dried snappy dressers, fluent in business plans and audit-speak. Whatever induced Dirk Maggs, the inspired producer of *Superman and Spiderman*, to associate himself with this?

A theatre about the omnipresence of comedians is currently being sired in the press: burst from the confines of comedy, wits are now being used as presenters to jolly up every other kind of programme. As if to prove it, the comedian Arthur Smith presents Radio 4's new *Sentimental Journey* on personal travel experiences (what other kind is there?). Yet in this opener, in Cuba with Arthur Scargill, Smith was singularly unhumorous, as if the combined enormity of Cuba's revolution and Scargill's reputation had quite dried up his jokes' glands. And although he insisted that Scargill had a sense of humour, this wasn't much in evidence either.

On the contrary, Scargill used every opportunity (in that mad-dening, hustling way of politicians) to denigrate his central beliefs which were perfectly sensible, just too insistent. One longed for some flare in his iron-plated certainties, and here Smith came into his own as a reporter, asking the necessary questions. Like "Don't you ever get a doubt?" The answer was "no".

File On 4 (Radio 4) returned with a measured but disturbing report from Julian O'Halloran on the Scottish E-Coli epidemic and the Government's lax regulation of the meat industry. A former meat inspector's account of abattoir practice will have instantly increased the national percentage of vegetarians, while a training video for butchers to help them to tell them how to cook a burger proved actually to be a perfect recipe for E-Coli. As a result of O'Halloran's persistent questioning, the video has been withdrawn. Was it a radio programme having an impact even before transmission.

The Book of the Week

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The Guardian INTERACTIVE



Structurally unsound... Eddie Izzard, Stephen Frost, Neil Mullarkey and Suki Webster ask, whose line is it anyway?

PHOTOGRAPH: HENRIETTA BUTLER

Sounds like rollicks

Even four talented comics can't turn live improvisation into more than a game of charades, says Michael Billington

The blag

TONIGHT We Improvise: it's the title of a play by Pirandello. One that ironically gives the illusion of freedom and fluidity while being carefully scripted. I thought of it while seeing *One Word Improv* at the Albery, a comedy show that is genuinely spontaneous and unrehearsed. Watching it, however, I began to yearn for the structure of art.

What happens is that members of the audience shout out single words. The four talented performers — Eddie Izzard, Neil Mullarkey, Stephen Frost and Suki Webster — then improvise sketches around the word. Sometimes they are very brief. "Item" was the first word shouted out on Thursday night. Frost simply came on, coughed and went off. At other times, the sketches are disarmingly long. "Chainsaw," cried someone, which led to a labori-

ously unfunny pseudo-Arthurian item about decapitation.

Improv attracts a young audience, and you can see why: it is meant to be wild, unpredictable, dangerous, the antithesis of the tedious banalities of sitcom. It also taps into a performer's subconscious. But watching it teaches you a lot. For a start you learn that, while getting into a sketch is relatively easy, getting out is extremely hard. Much of the evening is spent watching the actors desperately searching for a punline: Izzard, I noticed, favours four-letter words while Mullarkey prefers attacking people with chairs. By the end of the evening — the final word was "vandal" — the bar-stools on which the actors perch had been wrecked in an orgy of Gothic mayhem.

What you also learn is that improv, while an invaluable comic tool, is a dubious public spectacle. A lot of first-rate comedy obviously begins with the exploration of an idea rather than

a set script: the sketches of Peter Cook and Dudley Moore, John Bird and John Fortune and even, on a larger scale, the films and plays of Mike Leigh all deploy improvisatory techniques. But in all those cases it is a means to an end: the evolution of something with an achieved form. With *One Word Improv*, however, the process has itself become the product with unvarying results for those who still cherish comic structure.

What you get at the Albery is simply a touché, and slightly lewd, form of charades. The process throws up the odd line that would probably elude a scriptwriter. Playing a sex-starved occupant of a jail, Izzard memorably cries, "haven't seen a woman in 10 years — and I've only been in here for four." Later, as a harassed teacher asked by a pupil to define the word minge, he surreally replies, "A minge is a small canary that lives in the tropics." But these are the occasional gems in an evening that contains much

verbal falling about. Does it matter? Obviously not for a young audience that comes for an experience: for a piece of theatrical sport. Indeed, the evening is more like soccer than theatre. Each half lasts about 45 minutes. Long periods of tedium, are illuminated by flashes of excitement. I even felt there must have been a team-talk in the interval since a low-key first half was followed by lively shots at goal in the second, with Stephen Frost as chief striker.

But, in the end, *One Word Improv* left me unsatisfied: it showed that improvisation often takes 10 minutes to achieve what a skilled writer could do in one. Only one sketch had a definite shape and that, I guess, was because its chosen word — "alcoholism" — comes up time and again. It showed a sombre-faced man on a stool listening to another man who muttered, "My name is George Johnson and I'm a motor mechanic"; only gradually did it dawn on him that he had come to the wrong kind of AA meeting.

While I've no wish to kill anyone's pleasure, *One Word Improv* also suggests that comedy today has become somewhat self-aggrandising. It used to be part of

the diverse spectrum of entertainment: "variety". It is now big business. It boasts its own specialist venues and critics. It makes people stars. It also goes on much too long. In his solo shows, Eddie Izzard extends his undeniable natural talent by doing two-hour sets, and even here we are expected to keep guffawing for 90 minutes.

It was *Beyond The Fringe* that broke the mould by dispensing with all the seeming irrelevances of revue: jugglers, acrobats and apache ballets danced by men in berets and ladies in fishnet tights. At the time, it was a welcome revolution. But, confronting the hype of over-commercialised modern comedy, am I alone in begging for an occasional relief from laughter?

I have loved comics and clowns all my life. But I yearn for a comedy that is politically relevant (not correct, just relevant) and that is boned and shaped rather than hurled at us raw. We came in with Pirandello; and it was he, above all, who argued that art has to have a structure precisely because life does not.

At the Albery, London WC2 (0171 389 1740) to March 16.

Lyn Gardner is swept along by Shared Experience's *The Tempest*

Storm warning

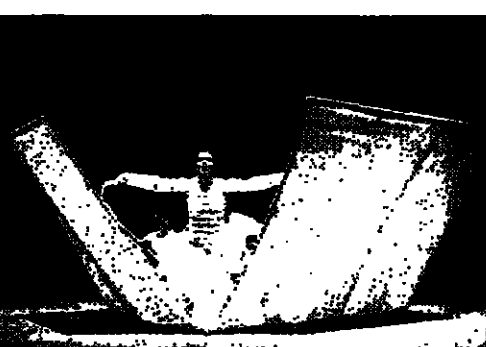
The magic

IN A pre-storm dumb show a mobile Miranda frolics with Caliban. Innocent games turn to sexual awareness, leaping to lust. Paradise has been lost. Nancy Meckler's production of *The Tempest* for Shared Experience is all about the struggle to create a brave new world after the Fall.

It is also about the struggles of parenthood, power and the urge,

sometimes misguided, to protect the young. What is implicit in the relationship between father and daughter is made explicit here between Prospero (a subdued Michael Cashman) and Ariel, the latter played rather brilliantly by Rachel Sanders as a recalcitrant and otherworldly teenager bowed by parental expectation.

Regret and affection mingle, the young spite serving as a conscience to the magician as the young do so often for their elders. The pain of leaving is heightened



Troubled spirit... Rachel Sanders as Ariel, an otherworldly and recalcitrant teenager bowed by her parents' expectations

by the sudden, shocking realisation that the white designer number Ariel has floated about in all evening is in fact a straightjacket.

There are so many fine things in this production that I can't quite work out why the overall impact is less than you might expect. I sus-

pect it is quite simply to do with the fact that a large proscenium arch theatre robs the evening of the intimacy necessary to convey its emotional delicacy.

What isn't lacking is magic. This is truly an enchanted isle full of Turnersque lighting and exquis-

sive percussive music, composed by Peter Salem, and performed largely by Sanders. Four rectangles of sail represent the sea and a free-standing maze on the land through which the shipwrecked are led on a merry dance. This is about journeys in every sense.

The comedy (Trinculo and Stephano looking like Beckett refugees) is not especially funny, and like many Shared Experience productions there are odd moments of sensation when everyone looks as if they've studied too long at an obscure European mime school. But on the whole there is a physical fluidity about the production to match its emotional release. At its best it raises quite a storm.

At the Grand Theatre, Blackpool (01253 28372) from Feb 6-8. Then tours to Darlington, Barnsley and Brighton.

Trip-hop, garage, jungle... and the pibroch, of course. Bob Flynn is astonished by the brilliant Martyn Bennett

Bagpipes and bass

The find

THE FUTURE sound of Celtidom is here. Through clouds of smoke and glaring lights a slight, dreadlocked boy is lacing spiralling rolls of the pibroch — the solo bagpipe — through a thunderous shrum/rhythm of garage, jungle and trip-hop: Martyn Bennett, the first dub-piper, hops like an elf to his own percussive sequences.

Near the end of three crowded weeks of Celtic Connections, Glasgow's majestic celebration of traditional music and Celtic arts, the new Scots traditionalists were in force. They reflect a burgeoning movement of young, seriously dance-oriented musicians blending Scots-Irish music with world rhythms. Sales Celtic, the Peat Bog Fairies, Shogunferry (all of them successful players on the Scottish gig scene) were present on the Celtic Connections circuit.

In the fairlight-dripped Old Fruitmarket, packed with a young dance audience, Martyn Bennett took it all on to another plateau. Bennett, the Celtic equivalent of Beck, plays a random harvest of acoustic instruments — pipes, fiddles and flute — meshed with his own dazzling programming of percussion, voice and instrument samples arranged into folk and



Bennett... world-class musician who merges old and new styles

jazz time signatures, building a collage of new dance and ancient reels. This is where ambient washes are pointed up by Bennett's glorious pipe laments and frenetic Highland fiddle dance tunes melt into shuddering percussion, sampled and looped back into themselves.

A virtuosic musician, Bennett bends and trails the notes of the pipes into jazz contours during Jacobite bebop set to complex time codes which fooled the leaping dancers, before driving full-force into the pipe and fiddle

whirlwind of Three Sheeps (sic) To The Wind. Throughout he sends flowing acoustic music over reverberant and echoed drum sequences made in his bedroom studio in Edinburgh. All the time, the 25-year-old Bennett moves towards a seamless confluence of old and new.

The folk purists have already accused Bennett of producing "karaoke folk", but Bennett is a world-class musician who sees traditional music as an ancient groove that is always expanding and changing. Born in Newfounland, he was weaned on the roots music of his Scottish parents and a community of Scots Canadian pipers, dancers and singers. His mother is Margaret Bennett — a Scots historian and renowned Gaelic singer — and he is steeped in traditional music; having graduated from the School for Musically Gifted Children in Edinburgh to study classical violin at the Royal Scots Academy of Music and Drama before finding hip-hop and rave music, while busking in Argyle Street with pipes and a car-battery-powered beat-box.

This blend of musical genres has been attempted before, but never with such flair, wit and passion. Bennett has recognised that the cellidom was the first rave — a gathering in which you get out of your mind and dance till you drop.

The Nature of Blood
Caryl Phillips

'A carefully crafted work, shifting seamlessly between past and present, and between different cultures... It is his boldest work to date, for a larger part of its boldness has to do with its artistry, the wonderfully measured pace of its unfolding. Phillips is a storyteller of considerable talent.' *The Times*

Caryl Phillips will be reading from
The Nature of Blood in:

Cambridge	London
7pm 6 February	7.30pm 12 February
Waterstone's, 6 Bridge Street	Purcell Room, Royal Festival Hall, South Bank
Leeds	Manchester
6pm 11 February	7pm 13 February
West Yorkshire Playhouse,	Waterstone's, 91 Deansgate
Playhouse Square, Quarry Hill	



Cricket

Tour match: New Zealand A v England XI

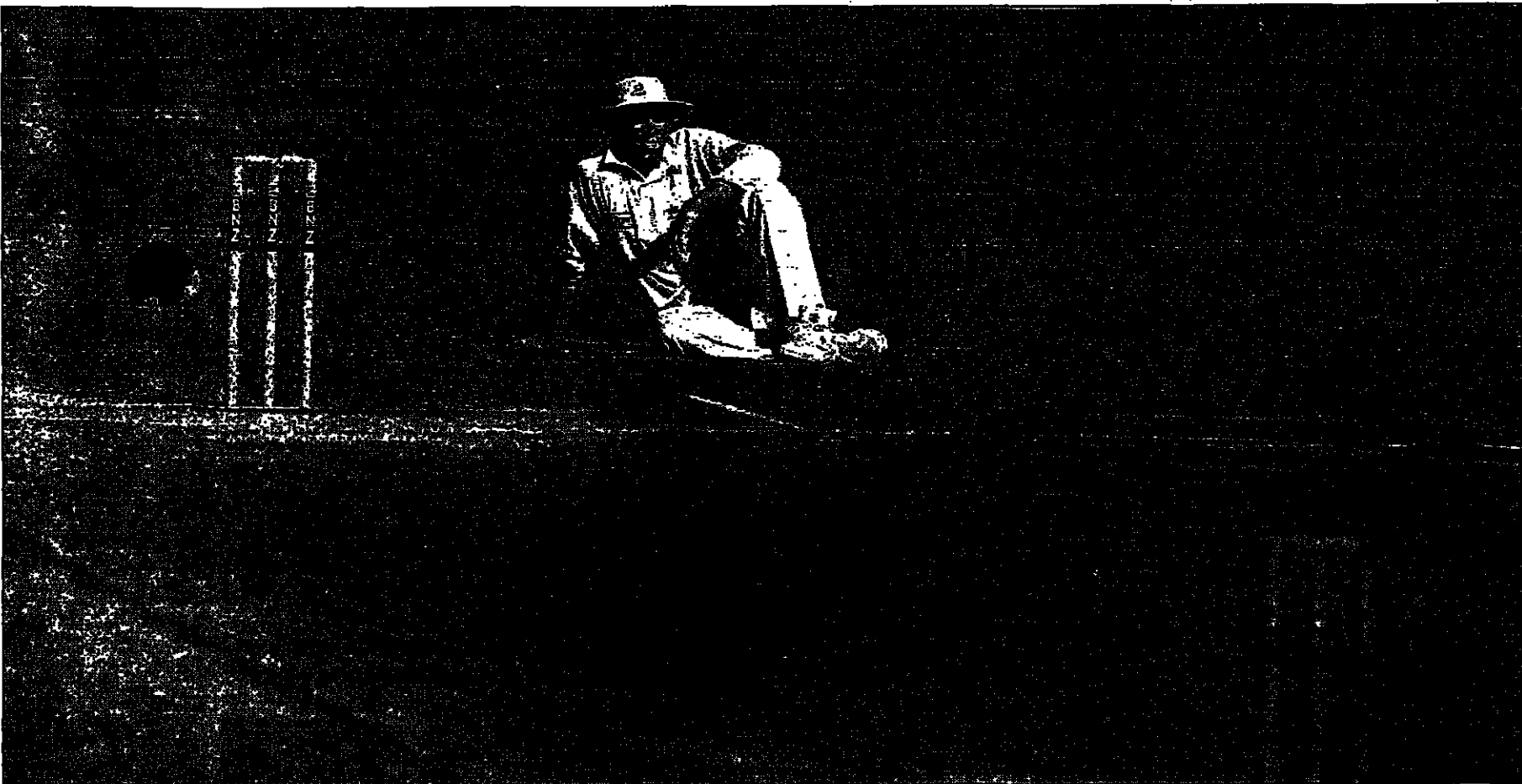
The collapsible show bumbles on

Paul Weaver in Wanganui

THERE is a growing suspicion that the only way to make this England cricket team perform is to throw down a banana skin rather than a gauntlet.

Whether it is Mashonaland or Wanganui, the Australian Academy or the West Indies President's XI, Holland or New Zealand's second string, it does not matter: the peripatetic circus act that is Captain Grumpy, Mr Bumble and his Amazing Travelling Humiliations will never disappoint.

The cricket globe is pitted like a golf ball with the pratfalls of England cricketers but here at Victoria Park, where they have been so overrun by New Zealand A it almost



All on his own... Mike Atherton thinks of England or his future or juggling the bowlers during another long session in the field in Wanganui yesterday

GRAHAM CHADWICK

NEW ZEALAND A vs First Innings 101 (M J Horne 64, Silverwood 6-44)

ENGLAND XI

First innings (overnight 30-3)

N Hussain c Harris b Davis	14
C M Spence c Harris b Davis	7
R C Irani c Harris b Davis	40
R D B Croft c Harris b Davis	8
R C Russell c Harris b Davis	6
A R Giddey c Harris b Davis	6
C E W Silverwood c Harris	6
D Wiseman	11
P R Tait not out	0
Extras (nb, m)	0
Total (442 overs)	107

Fall of wickets: 20, 25, 27, 37, 78, 107

Best figures: Allott 15.3-5-44-4; Davis 14-8-22-4; Kennedy 7-2-20-0; Wiseman 6-2-13-2

NEW ZEALAND A

Second innings

D J Murray b Caddick	12
C M Spence c Knight b Irani	47
S Chander c Atherton b Caddick	8
M Home b b Tait	6
C M Harris not out	6
C D Howell not out	81
Extras (nb, m)	7
Total (for 4, 63 overs)	187

Fall of wickets: 28, 84, 101, 101

Best figures: Silverwood 11-4-63-0; Croft 19-4-38-1; Harris 6-1-11-1; Wills 4-0-20-0; Wiseman 6-2-13-2

seems like the last reel of the film Zulu, there is a persevering generosity of spirit towards their players.

If England really are inferior to the New Zealand second XI, then the game is up. But, one suspects, this is not the case. In July 1995 the West Indians lost to Sussex by an innings and 121 runs, immediately before they de-

feated England by an innings and 64 runs at Edgbaston in the third Test.

If England can inflict a comparable defeat on New Zealand in Wellington next week, all will be forgiven; in the meantime their performance here will be seen as a major disappointment.

Essentially they have failed a test of character. This can be partly excused because half of them are jaded, mentally and physically, after the Auckland Test.

The other half, moreover, consists of some players who have been seen less frequently than Lord Lucan, men like Jack Russell, who an innings and 121 runs, immediately before they de-

Ronnie Irani and Andrew Caddick.

The coach David Lloyd and his assistant John Emburey have already made it clear that they did not want this fixture, and they do have a point. But the itinerary was agreed before the start of the tour, and the management have allowed their misgivings to infiltrate the changing-room.

England were bowled out for 107 yesterday, to trail by 74 runs, and at the end of the second day's play New Zealand A were in a commanding position at 187 for four, a lead of 81; they should not have had it so easy.

The New Zealand coach Steve Rixon said last night: "I

felt it was important to keep England down between the Test matches and I feel we have done that. This game is about application, and our opening bowlers have been quick in this match. If you want to psych yourself out of a game you can do it."

Emburey shrugged: "You have got to give them credit. Their opening bowlers in this match have more pace than ours." That is certain.

But yesterday Geoff Allott and Heath Davis, who are both in the running for games in Wellington, also bowled with more accuracy and commitment than Chris Silverwood and Caddick. The New Zealand bowlers were also more determined.

When England resumed on 30 for three the pitch behaved like a minefield. There was some evidence of the ball going through the top. Craig White, who is looking an increasingly detached figure as the second Test approaches, was out to the fifth ball of the fifth over, caught at short leg. Three overs later an unplayable delivery from Davis caught the shoulder of Nasser Hussain's bat and England were 51 for five.

Robert Croft, dropped at slip before he had scored, was caught in the gully for two and two balls later, in the same Davis over, Russell "fetched" another lifter to gully; 57 for seven.

A few brave blows from

Irani, who struck seven fours in his 40, carried this feeble performance into three figures, but he did not cause undue damage to the figures of Allott, four for 44, or Davis, four for 22, both of whom are now putting a great deal of pressure on the Test places of Danny Morrison and Justin Vaughan.

England's players hoped to fill their boots here but they would have struggled to stretch the leather of a size five winkle-picker.

Allott, who is first in line for the Test, thanked his employers, the ANZ Bank, for giving him time off.

The part-Maori Davis shrugged self-consciously and said: "I've bowled a lot

quicker than that this season. There was nothing wrong with the pitch but the England batsmen played some bad shots."

Immediately New Zealand A batted again the pitch, strangely, looked flatter. White came on for the 54th over, with the score 151 for four, and his first delivery was smashed for four.

It would be almost a relief to report that England's players had been up late drinking, gambling and womanising in downtown Wanganui. Sadly they remain bright-eyed, eager and dedicated as the Union flag is once again blashed to a flutter of truce under yet another foreign sun.

Graveney cleared to stand against Gooch

Mike Selvey

DAVID GRAVENEY, the former Gloucestershire and Durham captain, has been given the all-clear by the Professional Cricketers' Association to stand for election as chairman of the England selectors in succession to Raymond Illingworth, who relinquished the post in October.

Graveney has twice been blocked from standing for the post by the PCA, of which he is general secretary. It claimed a conflict of interest. However, discussions between the PCA and the newly formed England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) have established that the new chairman, due to be in place by mid-March, will have his powers restricted to selection. Since discipline will be handled independently, the PCA is happy to endorse Graveney's candidature.

Graveney's first attempt to get his hands on what has become one of the more polemic chairs in the game came last March when he was asked by several counties to stand against Illingworth. However, the PCA membership pointed to a potential conflict of interests if Graveney, as chairman, continued to represent players at disciplinary hearings. As a result he withdrew.

Last November he was asked again if he could stand but was rebuffed on the same grounds. Although the barrier has now been lifted, Graveney may not meet with universal approval. Unlike Australia, where the chairman of selectors doubles as the Invisibles Man, the ECB sees the role as high profile, believing that the successful candidate should have an international pedigree. Although Graveney has impressed as a selector, he has not played Test cricket.

Graveney's only rival so far is Graham Gooch, who said he would retire as a player if appointed. But Gooch's selection input when he was captain was lacklustre, and his intrusions all but ended his Gower's Test career when England could ill afford it.

Well, almost everything. Steve Waugh published his South African tour diary a couple of years ago. "An enjoyable night," he wrote in one typical passage, "was had by all at the Hard Rock Cafe. The boys gave the menu a good mull, and then washed down their meals with a few cleansing ales." He is now a ghost-writer for a two-hour race.

Family and friends paid their last respects at the funeral of Surrey's Graham Kersey in south London yesterday. The 33-year-old batsman and wicketkeeper, who broke into the Surrey first team after some impressive second XI performances, died after a car accident before Christmas in Australia, where he was playing and coaching.

A grateful Australia pays tribute to its Waugh heroes

Matthew Engel in Perth, where the twin all-rounders equal the fraternal world record today by playing in their 43rd Test together

A MID the endless discussion about why England keep screwing up Test matches and Australia do not, consider this possibility. What if Rodger and Bev Waugh had opened their newspaper's shop in Sheffield, say, instead of the western suburbs of Sydney?

What if their twins, Steve and Mark, had been playing for England instead of Australia with 6,000 runs between them at a joint average of well over 50, they would have solved England's middle-order problems. End of crisis, more or less.

Had they been English, though, the Waugh boys

would probably have developed temperamental or technical flaws, or never bothered to play professionally, or never picked up bats in the first place. End of fantasy.

The Waughas have shown their ability to be very Australian and very English. In the desperate hours of 1985-86, when half the established side had shovelled off to shore up apartheid, Mark, less than five minutes younger, took five years longer to be picked. For a while they were contesting one place but since the slaughter of England in the Ashes series of 1983 there has been no doubt that the team had room for both.

This century was when the one-Test wonder Dick Richardson stepped up to join his brother Peter against West Indies in 1957.

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Mark is the more obviously gifted batsman, inclined to blaze away and then get out. The grim-faced, alighter Steve seems more determined to outlast his brother. But yet this comparison has always irritated Mark. "I put the same price on my wicket as Stephen," he said tartly this week. "I always have."

In the past 24 years Steve has averaged 75 in Tests, easily top of the batting world. Mark is 15th, averaging 45. Steve is also third in the world bowling lists over the same period, behind only Allan Donald and Heath Streak, with an average of 21 for his little seamers.

The Australia media have feted them both this week. There is some worry that the Australian team, undisputed world champions after

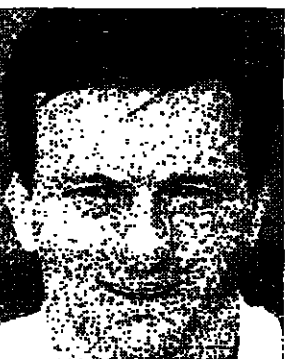
their steamroller job on the Windies in Adelaide — may be growing old together, a point emphasised by the news of the great fast bowler Craig

McDermott's retirement on Thursday. The Waughas are 31, a bit past it in Australian terms, but intend to play on for a lot longer yet. There is

also the possibility of different Waughfare: their kid brothers Dean and Danny are coming through the New South Wales system, and all the Waughas appear to be good at everything they do.

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Waugh department... Steve, left, and Mark

Weekend fixtures

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FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP

A Villa v Sunderland

Blackburn v West Ham

Dorset v Liverpool

Doncaster v Nottingham Forest

Leeds v Arsenal

Man Utd v Southampton

Sheff Wed v Coventry

Tottenham v Chelsea

Wimbledon v Middlesbrough

Tottenham v Chelsea

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Tottenham v Chelsea

Soccer

Rovers anger at Eriksson rumours

Ian Ross

BLACKBURN Rovers yesterday insisted that the Swedish coach Sven Goran Eriksson would definitely move to England this summer to take over as manager at Ewood Park.

Robert Coar, Blackburn's chairman, condemned as "rubbish" stories suggesting Eriksson is ready to renege on the deal he struck with the Lancashire club recently.

Eriksson has signed a contract with Blackburn taking effect from July 1, the date he is scheduled to leave Sampdoria. "The sooner people accept these facts the better for everyone," said Coar.

However, reports in Italy have said Eriksson is being courted by another Serie A club Lazio, who dismissed their coach Zdenek Zeman earlier this week.

Yesterday the respected Rome-based Corriere dello Sport claimed Eriksson had already asked Blackburn to release him from his contract immediately.

The report said Eriksson wanted to succeed Zeman at Lazio because of a "dramatic change" in personal circumstances.

It is understood Eriksson and his wife have separated and that he wants to remain in Italy so that he can keep in contact with his two children, a daughter who lives with her mother in Florence and a son studying in Rome.

Coar said he found the stories confusing and reiterated his belief that Eriksson would definitely arrive at Blackburn this summer.

"We have a written agreement that he will be over here in July and that, believe me, is still the situation," he said. "I spoke to Sven on Thursday when he said that he had heard all the rumours linking him with a possible move to Lazio. He dismissed those rumours."

Neville Southall's long Everton career appears to be effectively over after the 38-year-old goalkeeper applied for the managerial vacancy at West Bromwich.

Southall is believed to have formally applied to become player-manager at The Hawthorns after Alan Buckley's sacking last week.

The goalkeeper decided to seek a move into management after being left out of the side at Newcastle in midweek. It was the first time he had been dropped by Everton in more than 14 years.

Redknapp waits on Kitson answer

WEST HAM expect an answer from Paul Kitson this weekend on whether he will join them after agreeing a £2.3 million fee with Newcastle. The striker has been reluctant to commit himself.

The Hammers are also understood to be back on the trail of the Celtic striker Pierre van Hooydonk after originally baulking at a £4 million-plus valuation. Other players linked with West Ham are Stoke's Mike Sheron and Wimbledon's Dean Holdsworth, though Joe Kinnear insists his player is not for sale.

"Harry Redknapp has narrowed it down to two preferred options. Hopefully we'll have news on new strikers in place next week," said West Ham's managing director Peter Storie.

Faustino Asprilla, another striker touted as a quick departure under Kenny Dalglish's regime, has received lavish praise from Newcastle's manager.

"Tino excites me," said Dalglish. "He's a player who has everything. He does things in training that you don't see anybody else do. And the pace he showed when he won our penalty against Everton in midweek was electric. I wouldn't like to be chasing him."

Manchester City have completed the £1.5 million signing of Kevin Horlock from Swindon. The midfielder is likely to make his debut at Oxford tomorrow.

Scottish preview

Weakened Celtic faced with testing visit to Tannadice

Patrick Glenn

CELTIC's relentless pursuit of Rangers in the Premier Division has produced the Parkhead side's most impressive run since Tommy Burns became their manager back in 1994.

Since the defeat in the Old Firm match at Ibrox on January 2, Celtic have won seven straight games, six in the league and one cup tie.

Impressive credentials but, remarkably, bettered by their hosts today at Tannadice. Dundee United, who have won seven straight games, six in the league and one cup tie.

Impressive credentials but, remarkably, bettered by their hosts today at Tannadice. Dundee United, who have won seven straight games, six in the league and one cup tie.

The trip to Tayside will probably be Celtic's last big hurdle before they face Rangers at Parkhead on March 16. Burns has problems in defence with Boyd, McKinlay and O'Neill unlikely to start while Stubbs lacks match fitness.

United last night agreed to pay a £100,000 fee to Millwall for the former Raith Rovers defender David Sinclair and, subject to medical, he plays today. But they will give a late fitness test to McLaren, a

forward who, with Winters, has the pace to bother any defence in the league. If McLaren fails, United's defence will be seriously diminished.

It is Celtic's own forward play, of course, which is their strength, with Cadete — 12 goals in the past seven matches — currently leading the way. Aided by support from Dalglish and Van Hooydonk, O'Donnell and Hannah from midfield, the Portuguese player is likely to keep the home defenders busy.

Rangers face a testing visit from Hearts, especially as they are without Gascoigne, but the Ibrox side have Laudrup back after a two-week absence with flu.

"Gascoigne's ankle injury, sustained in the Ajax sixes tournament in Amsterdam on Monday, should have cleared in time for England's game against Italy on Wednesday night," said the Celtic manager.

"Can't say I'm displeased about Gascoigne not playing," said the Hearts manager Jim Jeffries, who restores the Italian Salvatore to the side. "He's the one who can unlock any game for them."

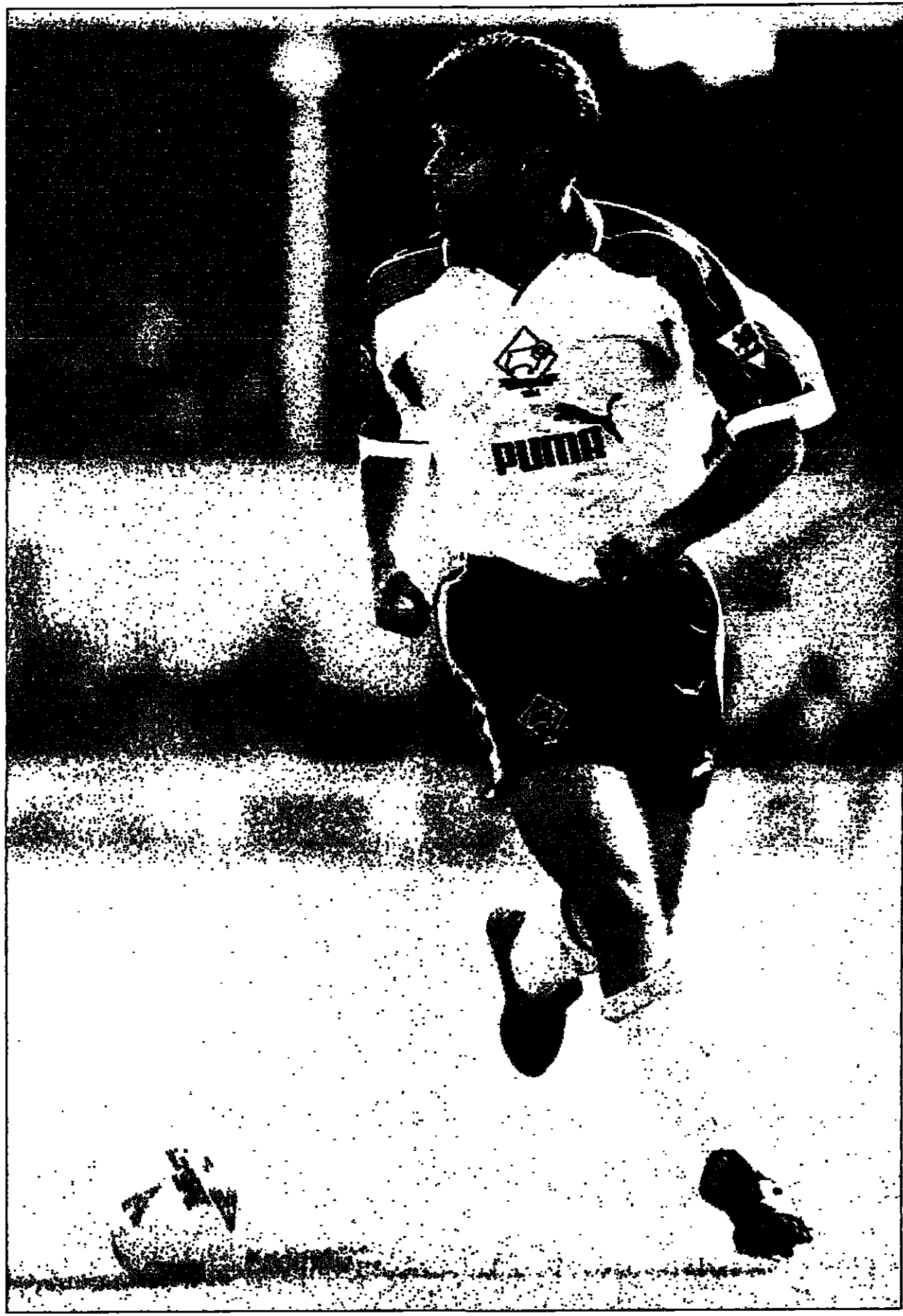
A N Other

THIS fast, aggressive midfielder played for nine different clubs and ended up managing one of them, but his name will always be associated with a particular team in a particular era. He regularly wore red but was more than a scarlet runner, and he scored some spectacular goals. After winning honours in England and Europe he coasted around the South, then moved back North and had a taste of Wales before doing a spot of English gardening. Until recently he was nesting with some sickly gannets.

Last week: John Beck (QPR, Coventry City, Fulham, Bournemouth, Cambridge United).



Performance of the week: Mark Hughes (Chelsea), whose dramatic arrival for the second half turned Sunday's FA Cup tie against Liverpool.



Split personality... Croatian Aljosa Asanovic's travels have taken him to France, Spain and now the East Midlands

A worthy Ace in the hole

Michael Walker on Aljosa Asanovic's growing influence in Derby's midfield

ANOTHER week, another set of performances, another set of opinions: the great Johnny Foreigner debate rages on. In the Harry Redknapp version of the exchange rate mechanism you can currently get about three Florins to the Zola — three weak and volatile Raducic to one small but stable Clancy.

Slaven Bilic agrees with the West Ham manager. There are too many accents in the dressing room at Upton Park, he argued. Liverpool's Steve McManaman offers a different angle — "the foreigners have it easy."

If Zola, or Vieira at Arsenal, performs one trick in a game it is singled out and magnified, says McManaman: if Matt Le Tissier performs one trick in a game he is singled out and called idle.

McManaman has a point. Last Saturday Derby County beat Aston Villa 3-1 in the FA Cup and the moment that will undoubtedly be repeated on our TV screens if Derby progress in the competition was a stunning piece of control on the thigh followed by a starting back-heeled volley by Aljosa Asanovic. The Croat's genius created Derby's second goal for Dean Sturridge, and the build-up, shadowing a bright finish, rightly earned Asanovic got the glory.

However, when McManaman and his Anfield colleagues run out at the Baseball Ground today they would be wrong to think of Asanovic as a one-trick wonder. For a start, at 31 he has learned much more in a career that has taken him from a debut at 17 for Hajduk Split to France, Spain and now England. For a midfielder there have been plenty of goals along the way,

notably in the Champions League for Hajduk and for the then Yugoslavia.

But as the bespectacled Asanovic sat in Derby's dressing room last night explaining the circuitous journey that brought him there, he made no secret of the goal that gave him "the most extreme experience". It came in a friendly against the United States seven years ago and as it was Croatia's first match for half a century "the goal in Zagreb was important for all of us".

Such was his desire to play in the game that Asanovic, then transferred to Metz, hired a private jet to take him home. It is not your average journeyman's mode of transport but Asanovic denied a

capacity for flamboyance. He came across as placid except when talking about Serbia and the war.

On that he said: "It had to happen, we wanted our autonomy. We didn't start the war, Serbia did, but Croatia will always defend itself. We wanted our own culture, our own history, our own flag. Obviously it has affected the [Yugoslavia] team, but then there were always tensions between us."

Having said that, when Asanovic ran up against Croatia and Milosevic last Saturday it was *nema problema*.

"We had a chat. It is not their fault or my fault that we had a war."

The Villa pair have been less than convincing this season, perceived as two more foreign disappointments. Conscious of the continuing debate, Asanovic displayed a frank appreciation of both sides of the argument. "I am aware that I am doing well and I am proud to be fulfilling expectations," he smiled.

"But then I have been abroad and got used to it. One of the main reasons foreign players fail to settle is the different culture. Some find it easy but others are less flexible and it can be difficult, especially if you are young or if your wife is not happy. That is the human factor. But then

I do understand the other side, that when people have paid a lot of money to a player they expect a return."

However, even though he said that there are many young footballers desperate to leave Croatia, Asanovic dismissed accusations of foreign mercenaries. "It's a job, and everybody wants to earn money. What I can't understand is these players who say 'I love England, I love the people, I love the culture.'"

Joined at this point by the player crucial to the arrival at Derby, Igor Stimac, they both paused, nodded and laughed: "Italians."

Stimac, also a Croat, had recommended his friend "Ace" to the Derby manager Jim Smith with a sound proviso: sign Asanovic before Euro 96 because you won't be able to afford him after it. Smith took one look and did the Derby.

Derby's season to date has been one of consolidation and hungry Liverpool will provide a true test of the East Midlands side's ability to survive. McManaman and John Barnes are Asanovic's favourite English players, but he regards Liverpool as the least English team in the Premier League. "They are more European, where we are trying to get to."

Asanovic knows that style may have to be sacrificed in a relegation battle. "I don't want to think about that. We must stay up." If Derby go down, will Asanovic be around next season? "I don't know," was his answer.

Man-marking leaves Russell feeling shirty

Soccer Diary

Martin Thorpe

THE Hednesford striker Keith Russell was so determined to get Ravanelli's shirt after last Saturday's FA Cup tie at Middlesbrough that he got his mum's friend at work who speaks Italian to write out "Fabrizio, posso avere la tua maglietta".

"I have been rehearsing it every day," said Keith before the game. "I'm going to say it to him in the tunnel before the start. And to guard against pre-match nerves making him forget his words, Keith had the card stuffed down his shorts. Just for the record, it read: "Fabrizio, posso avere la tua maglietta."

Alas, Keith's paint-sprayer who apparently has to have a day off before each game to ensure that his lungs are clear — was unsuccessful. All the other Hednesford players had asked Boro for Ravanelli's shirt too, so the Premier League club decided to present the visitors with a full set of shirts in the changing room and let them fight over who got the Italian's.

Actually, Hednesford gave each player the shirt of the Middlesbrough player they marked. Russell got Festa's.

STOCKPORT fans were quick to rub it at The Dell on Wednesday, taunting Le Tissier with: "You'll never play for England." Southampton fans were equally quick to reply: "He'll never play for Stockport."

ZAKARIA Yusuf Mwamzandi, a Nigerian, was so impressed when, during a recent visit to England, he saw Darlington play that he went home and changed the name of the team he manages. Mwamzandi, to Darlington FC (The Quakers). And when he told the original Darlington they were so impressed they sent him a full set of first-team shirts.

WHEN the former defender Ivan Golac finished managerial stints at Dundee United and Torquay, he seemed to melt away from football. In more ways than one. He now owns a chocolate factory in Belgrade.

AFTER that defeat by Chelsea, Liverpool have decided to go back to

their Anfield roots. Which should not be difficult as most of the area is full of two-up, two-downs (says Bob Dowd, Everton fan).

WHEN Ajax moved to their new stadium their old one was demolished but the turf was saved. It has been re-laid in the grounds of the city's crematorium so that families of deceased Ajax fans can meet the wishes of loved ones by scattering their ashes on the old pitch.

SO why is Andy Cole so happy? He has achieved his goal for '97.

ALAN SHEARER is on course for another record this season: scoring against every Premiership team. He has already found the net against 13 sides, and has six to go starting with Leicester tomorrow. The other five are Southampton, Middlesbrough, West Ham, Sunderland and Nottingham Forest, all of whom Newcastle have still to play.

The odds against the feat at the start of the season were 500-1. But three punters saw the potential and now stand to win £15,000.

QUOTE of the Week: "England fans are the best in the world. They wear their hearts on their sleeves, their scarves on their sleeves and their bobble hats on their sleeves" — Leighton James, Radio Lancashire (from Graham Smyth, Burnley).

FOLLOWING Celtic's move to England, Ayr United are apparently thinking of moving to Northern Ireland and changing their name to Londonderry Ayr.

STRANGE goings-on at Sporting Gijon, where the players won £1,600 each last Sunday by betting on themselves to draw or lose the derby with Oviedo. The game ended 0-0.

Such betting is common in Spain but not, it seems, maths lessons. The players won £1,600 in bets but lost £2,200 in win bonuses.

YOU may have seen a recent picture of a rejuvenated Kevin Keegan at Doncaster horse sales looking over his horse Aragon. Fittingly it is the sire of Cloud Of Dust and Midnight Escape.

Keegan also had a runner at Catterick yesterday. Match the Colour. Yes, it too failed to finish.

Team sheet

Aston Villa v Sunderland

Villa are again plagued by injury problems, with the midfielders Andy Townsend (shoulder), Ian Taylor (thigh), Mark Draper (hernia) and the striker Tommy Johnson (groin) all injured. Sunderland are likely to be unchanged as Andy Melville is determined to turn out at Villa Park despite a broken nose.

Blackburn v West Ham

The on-loan striker Mike Newell is set to line up for West Ham against his former club, for whom Jason Wilcox is expected to overcome a head injury to play on the wing. Ross Macleod may recall the midfielder Billy McNally.

Derby County v Liverpool

Gary Rowell will replace the suspended Christian Duff and line up alongside Paul McGrath and Jacob Lauren in Derby's defence. Michael Thomas and Phil Babb are available for Liverpool after completing suspensions, but Dominic Matteo (knee) is out.

Everton v Nottingham Forest

Forest are expected to field the same team who went down 1-0 to Coventry in midweek. The hamstringing Bryan Ryan and Dean Saunders are unlikely to be risked. Everton's Craig Short is almost certainly out with a head injury and the teenage couple back Richard Dunne may be given his chance by the manager Joe Royle.

Leeds United v Arsenal

Denlis Berghamp is still suspended for Arsenal although John Hartson is available. Arsenal are expected to stick with Ian Wright and Paul Merson up front. Richard Dunne is likely to start on the bench again for Leeds, whose goalkeeper Nigel

Martyn steps straight back in after recovering from a back injury.

Man United v Southampton

United's strike duo of Andy Cole and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer could start a match together for the first time. Mick Bates is still injured but Ronny Johnsen may return in defence against a side seeking the couple but beaten by Stockport in midweek.

Sheff Wednesday v Coventry

The Wednesday defenders Des, Walker (knee) and Ian Nolan (hamstring) are expected to start. Coventry's Don Dunbar is suspended and their midfield signings Gary Breen and Alessandro Costacurva are likely to play.

Tottenham v Chelsea

Darren Anderson is likely to start on the bench for Spurs, whose Swiss international Ramon Vega is injured. Gary Francis will have to hold a patch-up job as Chelsea's manager Ruud Geffert looks for a chance. He has to decide whether to play Mark Hughes, Gianfranco Zola and Gianluca Vialli up front again after they did so well against Liverpool.

Wimbledon v Middlesbrough

Boro will be without the suspended Fabrizio Ravanelli and Wimbledon's Willie Jones and Neil Arden, rested against Manchester United in midweek, are pressing for a recall.

TOMORROW

Newcastle v Leicester
John Bercowski is likely to strengthen the defence although John Hartson is available. Arsenal are expected to stick with Ian Wright and Paul Merson up front. Richard Dunne is likely to start on the bench again for Leeds, whose goalkeeper Nigel

Sport in brief

Tennis

After defeating Germany's Martin Damm 7-5, 6-3, Greg Rusedski will now face the world No. 10 Thomas Enqvist in the semi-finals of the Croatian Indoor Championships in Zagreb later today.

Rusedski, who finished last year with a world ranking of 48 but has since dropped to 56 following first-round defeats in the New Zealand and Australian Opens, is now assured of a return to the top 50.

Bowls

Scotland's Hugh Duff, the World Indoor champion in 1988 and last year's beaten finalist, moved through to tomorrow's final after recovering from a dropped first set to defeat the English qualifier Greg Harlow 5-7, 7-4, 7-4, 7-6.

Snooker

Mark King, the world No. 39 from Romford, beat Mark Wil-

liams, the defending Regal Welsh Open champion, 6-5 in the semi-finals yesterday to guarantee himself £21,000 — more than double his earnings this season — and a chance to deny either Stephen Hendry or John Parrott the £27,500 first prize in today's final, writes Clive Everton.

Badminton

Both defending singles champions went out of the English national championships before a shuttle had been struck in anger at Norwich yesterday, writes Richard Jago.

The top seeded former European champion Darren Hall withdrew with a torn Achilles sustained at the Korean Open last month while the women's champion Tanya Woodward pulled out with a stomach upset.

The 31-year-old Hall's absence denies him the chance to extend his record of eight national men's singles titles. An unseeded player is now certain to reach the final in the top half of the draw.

Results

Rugby Union

A INTERNATIONAL England 52, Scotland 17.
U-21 INTERNATIONAL England 52, Scotland 17.
CLASH MATCHES Wales 32, Pontypridd 14. Carmarthen 10, Rhosneigr 10.

Rugby League

SUPER LEAGUE WORLD NINES (Tynesville, Aus): Gt Britain 20, Tonga 14. Gt Britain 20, Tonga 14. Gt Britain 20, Tonga 14. Gt Britain 20, Tonga 14.

Golf

MEINER CLASSIC (Parrish, Aus): Sevenside 66, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

Badminton

ENGLISH NATIONAL CHAMPIONS (Nottingham): Men's singles: D. Hall (Essex) 15-3, 15-2; P. F. Ward (Sussex) 15-3, 15-2; P. F. Ward (Sussex) 15-3, 15-2; P. F. Ward (Sussex) 15-3, 15-2.

WORLD NINE (Parrish, Aus): Sevenside 66, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

WORLD NINE (Parrish, Aus): Sevenside 66, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

WORLD NINE (Parrish, Aus): Sevenside 66, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

WORLD NINE (Parrish, Aus): Sevenside 66, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

WORLD NINE (Parrish, Aus): Sevenside 66, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

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WORLD NINE (Parrish, Aus): Sevenside 66, 68, 69,

RUGBY UNION: THE FIVE NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIP

England v Scotland at Twickenham

Grayson holds the key for England

Robert Armstrong

NO Englishman carries a heavier burden of expectation at Twickenham than Paul Grayson at fly-half in today's Calcutta Cup match. Not only must the Northampton man kick his goals; he must shape the game with sufficient style to satisfy disgruntled England supporters who are paying up to £22 for a seat.

The Bath No. 10 Mike Catt has gone after three inconsistent pre-Christmas internationals exposed his poor decision-making under pressure. That left Alex King as the only serious rival to Grayson, who won five caps last season, and the England selectors deemed the 22-year-old Wasps fly-half to be a season's worth of the requisite experience.

Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of Grayson's restoration is that he will face Gregor Townsend, with whom he competes for the No. 10 shirt at Northampton and who has assumed that shirt for Scotland from Craig Chalmers after the match against Wales a fortnight ago.

Grayson has sometimes been playing at full-back for Northampton, with assurance and no little flair, while the 23-year-old Townsend has been taunting defences with bold running and sharp distribution, whether at fly-half or centre. So today's confrontation should make for an in-

triguing contrast of the national characteristics embodied in both players. Grayson is a cool, well-organised performer with a kick like a mule. Townsend has a genius for unlocking the tightest defence with instinctive decisions, and both men back their own judgment with pride. Grayson, ever present in last season's Five Nations, was the hammer of the Scots at Murrayfield, scoring all England's points in an 18-9 victory.

This time he knows he must strike a balance between excessive caution of the Rob Andrew type and the ill-considered risk-taking of the kind that relegated Catt to the bench. That precludes running kickable penalties, yet Grayson is keenly aware of the attacking potential of England's speedy back three: Stimpson, Sleightholme and Tony Underwood.

In some respects Grayson would seem to be the ideal competitor for Five Nations matches, which have a way of puncturing the reputation of playmakers and elevating them into match-winners. He is a reliable goalkicking machine and the England coach Jack Rowell regards the insurance of a top marksman as indispensable to his quest for a third successive Five Nations crown.

One thing is certain: the mercurial presence of Townsend opposite him will spur Grayson to seize every chance to scatter the Scots and un-

leash the midfield power of Carling and de Glanville which has lain largely dormant this season.

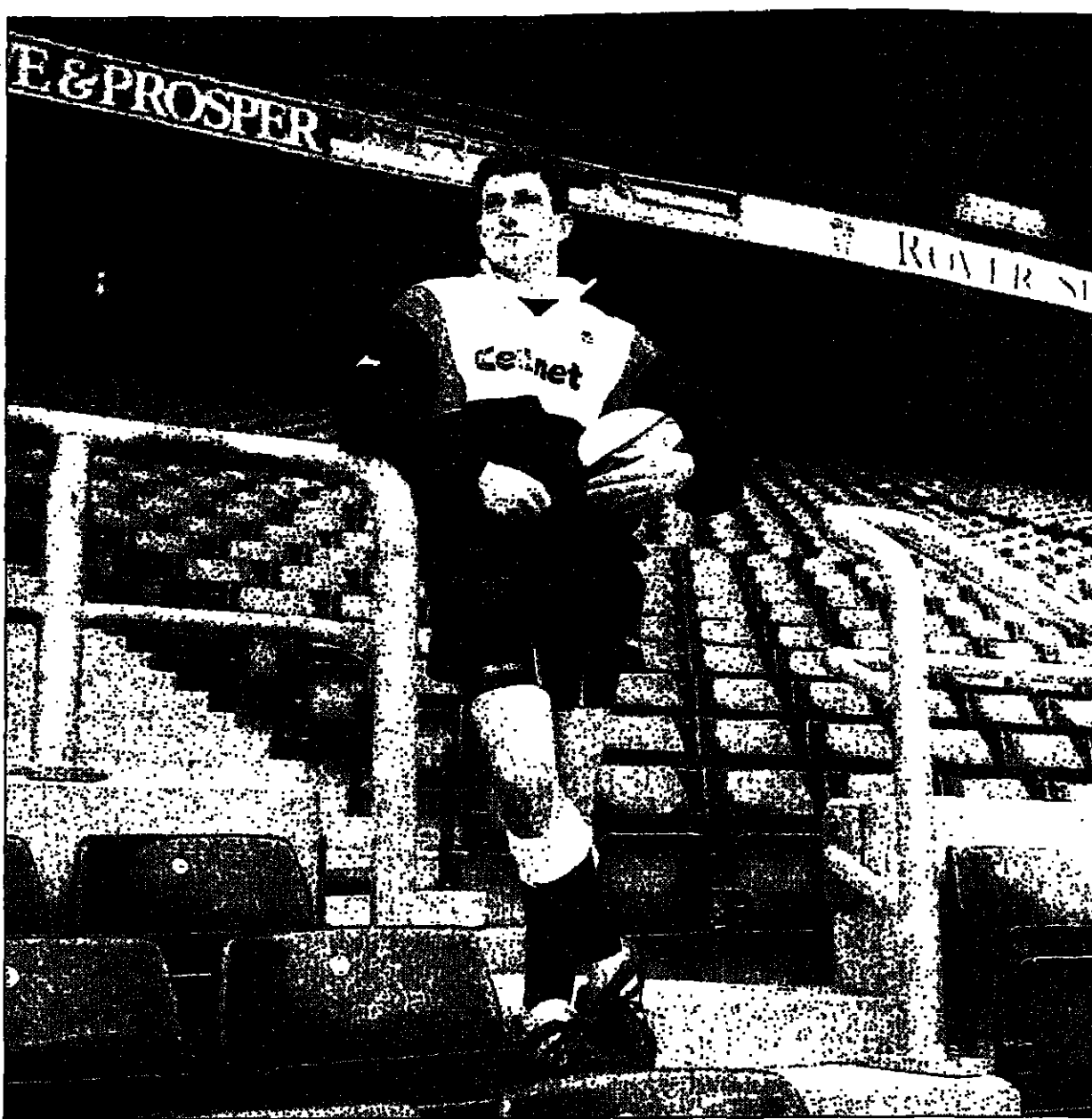
As captain, de Glanville wants England's Five Nations campaign to serve as a positive advertisement for European rugby. We can therefore expect a more varied approach from Grayson than last year, yet his options will hinge on how well the revamped back row of Dallaglio, Rodber and the new open-side Richard Hill cope with the fast rucking and generally close attentions of the Scots.

The best creative intentions could soon founder if Grayson and Gomersall have to contend with slow ball, the bane of Calcutta Cup games in recent seasons. England, of course, never relish the tag of favourites while the Scots positively thrive on the historical associations that go with the role of underdogs. Still, Scotland have failed to win at Twickenham since 1983 whereas England have chalked up seven victories in a row since Scotland's 1990 Grand Slam win at Murrayfield. England's record against the other three nations in the competition is not nearly as good.

Scotland look most vulnerable in the front row, where Stewart, Ellis and the debutant prop Tom Smith must only three caps between them, hardly a reservoir of experience.

The Scottish captain Rob Wainwright is confident that his side will win but, apart from the line-out threat they present and the force of their locks Reed and Weir, his optimism would be unfounded. Whatever England's tactical shortcomings in the autumn, they proved that they still had sufficient power and pull to front-load a difficult game and secure a win.

Today's 75,000 crowd expect something rather more creative than the traditional knees-up between ruthless English forwards and scavenging Scots who test the laws to the limit. But, as Grayson and company well know, the Calcutta Cup is much more than a game of rugby, which is why trials may turn out to be an optional extra in yet another blitz of English penalty goals.



Steps will be taken... Paul Grayson can dictate whether England are dour or dazzling today

PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARON

Grass roots withering as the jet-set fly-halves touch down

Ian Malin foresees trouble for England as the natural supply line of home-produced No. 10s is being throttled by overseas players

THE England coach Jack Rowell, bemoaning the lack of home-grown fly-halves last month, was uncharacteristically pessimistic about the future of the position. He said: "The number of No. 10s is drying up before our very eyes."

Rowell then named an England training squad that included the fly-halves Paul Grayson, Alex King and Mike Catt. Of the 12 first-choice stand-offs in the England League One the only other England-qualified players are Gloucester's promising Mark Maple and John Stabler of West Hartlepool, a journeyman who is 34 next week.

Wales management of "keeping feet on the ground" and "not getting carried away". Humphreys, who yesterday once more warned a hungry Wales public not to expect a repeat of Murrayfield, is right to urge caution. Stirring though the win over Scotland was, Wales do not look like a side about to swagger to a Grand Slam. There was a looseness about their forward play at Murrayfield that Ireland could exploit today.

Humphreys admitted: "When Ireland started against France, I thought the video tape had jammed on fast-forward. Ireland always come out and begin a game like no other country, and the French match showed them at their damaging best, flying in from everywhere." Certainly Arwel Thomas, the Wales fly-half, is unlikely to be granted too much space by the Irish loose forwards. The heart hopes Thomas, the classic running stand-off, can recover from his nightmare in Dublin last season. But the more prosaic skills of his opposite number Eric Elwood may just help make a narrow win for the Irish.

hind the South African, Rob Liley and the Irishman Niall Malone. Yet Jones, whose other game was the season's opener at Saracens, is an England Under-21 international, a playmaker of great potential. Likewise another former Under-21 player Simon Binns, a year older than Jones, compared favourably with La Croix last weekend despite playing behind a beaten pack in Rotherham's cup defeat by Harlequins.

And Richard Butland, born in Cape Town, raised in New Jersey, has had few recent opportunities with Catt occupying Bath's fly-half berth. Yet Butland revelled in one of those rare opportunities in the league win over Saracens a month ago.

Rowell's solution is to limit the amount of imports. In the short term the England coach says that England representative sides are having to give opportunities to players unable to command regular first-team places. And yesterday

the simple things with more control. Paul Turner, the former Wales stand-off, now coaching and captaining League Two Bedford, thinks the steady Grayson has been too much maligned.

"He is a better player than many give him credit for," says Turner. "I watched him play against Leicester recently and he had a marvellous game. He is a fine kicker, has good hands and can pass the ball well. He can play a flat game or a deep game."

"He has probably earned his recall. But the point really is that the fly-half has rarely been the key figure in the English game as it has been in Wales. We haven't had the big powerful forwards, so we've had to rely on the ingenuity of running fly-halves. In England the traditional strengths are the big back rows and powerful forwards."

"Rob Andrew wanted to be a running fly-half when he was at Cambridge University but he moulded himself to play in a style which England demanded. Grayson is similar. There simply aren't the type of fly-halves in England to open up a game in the way Mannix and La Croix are for their clubs."

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England A 52
Scotland A 17

Bracken sets up rout of Scots

ENGLAND outclassed the Scots with a stunning eight-try victory in the first A international between the countries at The Stoop yesterday, writes Robert Armstrong. The scrum-half Kyrren Bracken, discarded from England's Five Nations squad, signalled his determination to win back his place with an inventive performance embellished by well-worked tries.

Bracken's half-back partner Alex King married an otherwise compelling display of generalship with some inept goalkicking, failing with five kickable conversions. Overall, though, England had genuine cause for satisfaction as Will Greenwood led the side for the first time with an exciting midfield performance.

It was especially pleasing to see seven different players cross the Scotland line after a patchy first half in which England failed to make the most of their chances. Scotland, for whom the full-back Derrick Lee scored twice, never gave up but could not handle relentless pressure.

Within half an hour England's movement and cohesion earned them an 18-0 lead as the Scots failed to come to terms with the ability of the back-row forwards Diprose, Sheasby and Back to recycle the ball with speed and accuracy.

Greenwood opened the scoring with an exemplary try between the posts and King swiftly added a couple of penalty goals after Scotland killed the ball. Then Bracken grabbed an opportunist try on the left thanks to a slick transfer by Sheasby.

On the stroke of half-time the Scots, having shown signs of creative flair behind the scrum, got off the mark with a try by Lee, who completed a sweeping three-quarter move from left to right. However, shortly after the break Back, the England full-back, thundered over the line, courtesy of a pass by Greenwood, to put his side 25-5 in front.

A 48th-minute try by the Harlequins wing Luger, who showed a clean pair of heels in a 50-metre sprint down the right, turned the screw. The Scotland blind side Peters eased the pain a little with a storming try in the left corner but further scores by Diprose, Bracken and Adebayo, two of which King converted, carried England out of sight.

The closing minutes featured a brisk exchange of tries between Lee and Sheasby, back on the field after having a head wound bandaged. It was fitting that the England flanker should get on the scoresheet, given the amount of influence of the back-row forwards.

SCORES: England: A. Tries: Greenwood, Bracken, Luger, Diprose, Adebayo, Sheasby, Greenwood. King 2, Penalties: King 2. Scotland: Tries: Lee 2, Peters, Greenwood, Bracken. A. Tries: Greenwood, N. Greenwood, D. Luger, A. King, R. Bracken, R. Harlequins, C. Codd, J. Mannix, G. Archer, D. Sims, C. Sheasby, N. Back, A. Diprose.

SCOTLAND: A. D. Lee, J. Cragg, P. Rouse, D. Hodge, C. Glasgow, S. Wright, S. Campbell, S. Guinness, E. Peters, C. Hogg, M. Wallace.

REFEREE: C. Hawke (NZ).

Carling a doubt for Lions tour

WILL CARLING has said he is unlikely to go on this summer's Lions tour of South Africa even if selected. The former England captain does not want to spend so much time away from home.

"I have to say I would doubt whether I would go, even if I was asked," he tells today's Radio 5 Live's Sport on Five programme.

Carling added: "There's been all sorts written but I haven't said anything about the Lions before. I haven't been asked but I don't even know if I'm in the frame."

Twickenham teams

ENGLAND	SCOTLAND
T Stimpson (Newcastle)	R Shepherd (Melrose)
J Sleightholme (Bath)	D Stark (Melrose)
W Carling (Harlequins)	A Stanger (Hawick)
P de Glanville (Bath, capt)	R Eriksson (Ldn Scottish)
T Underwood (Newcastle)	K Logan (Stirling Co)
P Grayson (Northampton)	G Townsend (Northampton)
A Gomersall (Wasps)	B Redpath (Melrose)
G Rowntree (Leicester)	G Smith (Watsonians)
M Regan (Bristol)	G Ellis (Currie)
J Leonard (Harlequins)	M Stewart (Northampton)
M Johnson (Leicester)	G Weir (Newcastle)
S Sheasby (Bristol)	A Reed (Wasps)
L Dallaglio (Wasps)	P Walton (Newcastle)
R Hill (Saracens)	I Smith (Gloucester)
T Rodber (Northampton)	R Wainwright (Watsonians, capt)

REPLACEMENTS: England: J. Guscott (Bath), M. Catt (Bath), A. Halsey (Leicester), D. Gathorn (Leicester), P. Gearing (Gloucester), B. Clarke (Richmond).

Scotland: S. Hastings (Watsonians), C. Chalmers (Melrose), G. Armstrong (Newcastle), S. Munro (Glasgow), D. Hinton (Bath), S. Brotherton (Glasgow).

Referee: P. O'Brien (New Zealand)

Wales v Ireland at Cardiff

Irish find hope in history

Ian Malin

IRELAND's supporters were crossing the sea to Wales more in hope than expectation yesterday. But their players were probably just relieved to be leaving Dublin for the weekend.

Four defeats at Lansdowne Road in a season that has lurched from one mishap to another have left Ireland feeling little in the way of home comfort for the visit of England in a fortnight's time. In the meantime today's visit to Cardiff, where Ireland have not been beaten for 14 years but where they will be very much the underdogs, is their fraying lifeline.

The fact that last month's

defeat by France by a four-all try margin, a game in which Ireland lost their inspirational captain Keith Wood for the rest of the season, was heralded as something of a success tells its own sorry story.

Jim Staples, the Harlequins full-back, takes over from his club-mate Wood as captain today. Staples was trying to talk up Ireland's chances yesterday. That he can talk at all is something of a bonus. In December he broke his jaw in a league game at Bath, the latest in a series of injuries that have blighted his career.

That he recovered to score the only try in the return against Bath, a game Harlequins won, should inspire his lagging team. "The Arms

Park is a special ground to play on with a tremendous atmosphere and we've managed to put in a few good performances here in recent years," said Staples. "But Wales have got their tails up."

Tails up, indeed. Wales's 34-19 win at Murrayfield a fortnight ago was as heart-warming as it was unexpected. After the game there was much talk by the captain John Humphreys and the Wales management of "keeping feet on the ground" and of "not getting carried away".

Humphreys, who yesterday once more warned a hungry Wales public not to expect a repeat of Murrayfield, is right to urge caution. Stirring though the win over Scotland was, Wales do not look like a side about to swagger to a Grand Slam. There was a looseness about their forward play at Murrayfield that Ireland could exploit today.

Humphreys admitted: "When Ireland started against France, I thought the video tape had jammed on fast-forward. Ireland always come out and begin a game like no other country, and the French match showed them at their damaging best, flying in from everywhere."

Certainly Arwel Thomas, the Wales fly-half, is unlikely to be granted too much space by the Irish loose forwards. The heart hopes Thomas, the classic running stand-off, can recover from his nightmare in Dublin last season. But the more prosaic skills of his opposite number Eric Elwood may just help make a narrow win for the Irish.

Cardiff teams

WALES	IRELAND
N Jenkins (Pontypridd)	J Staples (Harlequins, capt)
I Evans (Llanelli)	D Wicks (St Mary's)
G Thomas (Bridgend)	J Bell (Northampton)
S Ollie (Swansea)	M Field (Malone)
D James (Bridgend)	D Crotty (Garryowen)
A Thomas (Swansea)	E Elwood (Lansdowne)
R Howley (Cardiff)	N Hogan (Terenure)
C Loader (Swansea)	M Poppell (Newcastle)
J Humphreys (Cardiff, capt)	R Neade (Newcastle)
D Young (Cardiff)	P Wallace (Saracens)
G O Llewellyn (Harlequins)	P Jones (Saracens)
M Rowley (Pontypridd)	J Davidson (Ldn Irish)
S Williams (Neath)	D Corkery (Bristol)
C Charlvis (Swansea)	D McBride (Malone)
S Guinness (Richmond)	E Miller (Leicester)

REPLACEMENTS: Wales: J. Davies (Cardiff), P. John (Pontypridd), C. Guinness (Richmond), K. Jones (Ebbw Vale), L. Marshall (Cardiff), G. Jenkins (Swansea).

Ireland: K. McQuillan (Lansdowne), D. Humphreys (Ldn Irish), S. McIvor (Garryowen), G. Furler (Ldn Irish), P. Flavin (Blackrock), S. Byrne (Blackrock).

Referee: W. Erickson (Australia)

Cosmopolitan No. 10s

Div 1 team	Player	Age	Honours
Leicester	Joel Stranasky	29	South Africa International
W. Wasps	Alex King	22	England A International
Bath	Mike Catt	25	England International
Harlequins	Thierry Lacroix	29	France International
Sale	Simon Mannix	25	New Zealand International
Saracens	Michael Lynagh	33	Australia International
Northampton	Paul Grayson	25	England International
Gloucester	Mark Maple	25	England U21 International
West Hartlepool	John Stabler	33	England North Division
Bristol	Paul Burke	23	Ireland International
London Irish	David Humphreys	25	Ireland International
Orrell	Matthew McCarthy	25	Wales B International

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No end to the blushes
Atherton's embarrassment goes on 20



The pressure at No 10
Grayson in the hot seat at Twickenham 23

The Guardian

Sport



Converting to Sky? ... England's Paul Grayson aims high at Twickenham yesterday as satellite TV raised the stakes for the Five Nations Championship with a multi-million-pound offer in which the money is split between the four home unions, to take the celebrated event away from the BBC under a four-year deal starting next season. PHOTOGRAPH: TOM JENKINS

Sky to land Five Nations

David Plummer on a £260m TV bid set to wrest rugby union's prized winter series

SKY television is expected this month to secure the rights to the Five Nations Championship. The current contract between the four home unions and the BBC, worth £9 million a year, expires at the end of the season. Sky is said to have bid around £260 million over four

years which would be split between the four home unions. Sky already has the rights from next season to show England's matches at Twickenham as well as all English domestic rugby after a protracted battle last year which nearly culminated in the end of the championship. England were expelled from

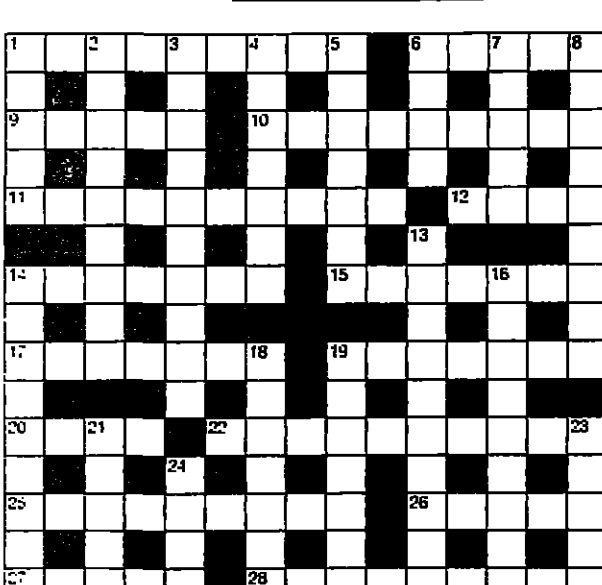
the tournament, only to be reinstated when the Rugby Football Union pledged it would never again conduct TV negotiations unilaterally. The Welsh, Scottish and Irish unions invited tenders for international and club rugby in their countries. Negotiations have taken place over the last two months and a decision is expected within three weeks. It is understood the three unions now accept that Sky's money offers them the only realistic chance of

long-term financial stability. Sky wants to hoover up everything but the three unions are determined to keep something for terrestrial television. However, the Five Nations, international with major southern hemisphere countries and the European Cup are likely to go to Sky. A sticking point is the issue of secondary rights for terrestrial stations. The unions have debated whether there could be simultaneous local broadcasts or whether games

could be shown as live shortly after the final whistle. Those questions still have to be resolved and the three unions want internationals against emerging nations as well as domestic club rugby to be sold to terrestrial television. Tenders have already been invited. The three have had to wrestle between principle and expediency. They all need the money only Sky can offer. A number of Wales's leading clubs are close to ruin. The Welsh Rugby Union wants to reduce its top division to eight clubs, four competing in the European Cup and the other four playing in the European Conference. A deal with Sky would bring in around £1 million a year.

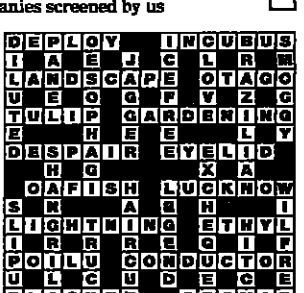
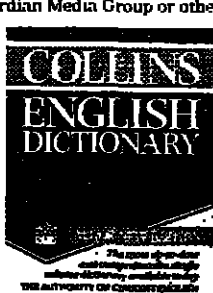
The Irish and Scottish unions are trying to reverse the flow of their leading players to English clubs. Ireland intends to put 100 players under contract; a condition would be that they played their club rugby at home. Scotland's policy is similar. They would need Sky's millions to pay for the contracts. Ireland are particularly anxious to preserve some rugby for terrestrial television and favour a split between Sky and the BBC or ITV. Sky wants complete acquisition, not piecemeal gains, but there will have to be compromise. The £260 million would not be split equally but there would not be the disparity in England's favour envisaged by the RFU a year ago. Part of the money would be apportioned on the basis of playing population and success. Sky has been offered the European Cup in a package with the Five Nations to enhance the value of the club competition which, despite its success this season, went ahead without a television deal after ITV's late decision to withdraw. The BBC later picked it up.

Guardian COLLINS Prize Crossword No 20,876



A copy of the Collins English Dictionary will be sent to the first five correct entries drawn. Entries to Guardian Crossword No 20,876, P.O. Box 180, East Molesey, Surrey, KT8 0YY, or Fax 0181 957 5010 by first post on Friday. Solution and winners in the Guardian on Monday February 10.

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CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,876

Set by Araucaria

Across

- 1 I'd turn round in unison for bi-coloured property (9)
- 6 Uncomplaining person, Copl is upset losing a letter (5)
- 9 Copl is likewise to the eye (5)
- 10 The man who made the (act) al's day first with a shrub (9)
- 11 Shrub replaced by a harpy has no strength inside (10)
- 12 Patriotic piece for 3 (4)
- 14, 15, 17 Arch round gallery (width equals height) where girl meets boy either way, taking the second of ... (7, 7, 7)
- 19 ... concerns about energy in poem (7)
- 20 Wait for bathroom feature to be curtailed (4)

Down

- 1 Flag (as it will without wind) (5)
- 2 Provide sound barrier (wish one could) (9)
- 3 Wealthy 15 speaker's shade bounced back (10)
- 4 Extreme youth as it is imagined (7)
- 5 Proceeds to the borders (7)

6 Swine's place unknown: no 19 across on this river! (4)
7 1 down 26 reveals where the first of 19 across came from (5)
8 Shrub needs water (Impor-tant) first to last, like this (9)
13 Blonde was sister, perhaps, without prejudice (4-6)
14 Indicator of pub permitting dogs in bar? (8)
15 I like this old language about love in quarantine (9)
18 City of the first 19 across carriers, number 5, is it? (7)
19 Third 19 across carrier is a mal (7)
21 Put off politely? (5)
23 Actor in Oedipus Rex (tragedy) (5)
24 Little boy in a whirl (4)

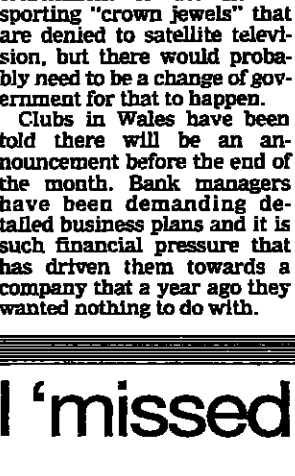
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Campbell 'missed putts on purpose'

David Henderson in Perth

IN a remarkable confession for a professional sportsman the New Zealand golfer Michael Campbell yesterday admitted to deliberately missing putts after a European PGA Tour event last year. Campbell, who finished third in the 1996 Open, said he lost his European card for 1997 because he deliberately missed putts after a prolonged run of poor form left him in despair. "I missed out on my card by two or three thousand pounds. If I had made the cut when I purposely three-putted, I could have made my card for this year," said Campbell, speaking during the Heineken Classic tournament after shooting a second-round 68 for a share of fourth place. He said the low point in his despair came during a



Campbell ... 'very stupid'

tournament in Spain. "I was missing cuts on purpose. I had a 20ft putt on the last hole and I three-putted on purpose [to miss the cut] because I didn't want to be there," he said. "I think it was somewhere in Spain, maybe the Spanish Open. I'm not quite sure." "It was very, very stupid of me to do that because I was chucking in the towel all the time. My mind was so fogged up. I was very pessimistic about my ability." The director of tour operations for the European PGA Tour John Paramor described Campbell's actions as "unfortunate and unprofessional." "It is the first time in my 22 years on tour that I have heard any-

thing like it. It is an unfortunate incident. "I am going to speak to Michael at some stage just to find out what it is all about because I am interested." Meanwhile Pádraig Harrington broke the course record with a 63 in the Heineken Classic. "I had trouble counting how many under par I was," said the Irishman who hit nine birdies in 14 holes to take a two-stroke lead over Frank Nobilo at the halfway stage of the tournament. Harrington's round was the best of his career. Although he also shot a 63 in the final round of the Launceston Trophy in Paris last September, the par there was 70 as against the 72 here.

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